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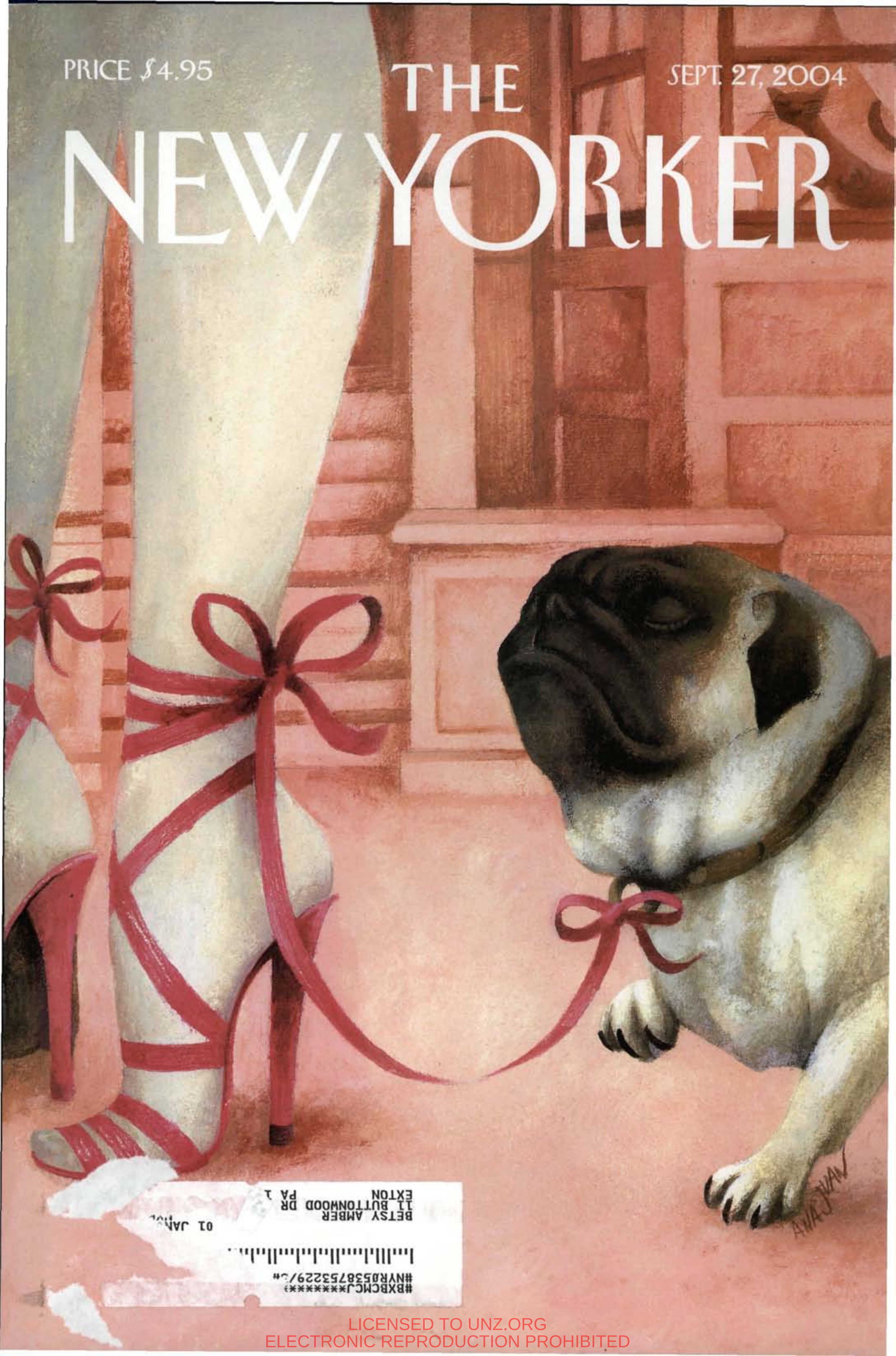

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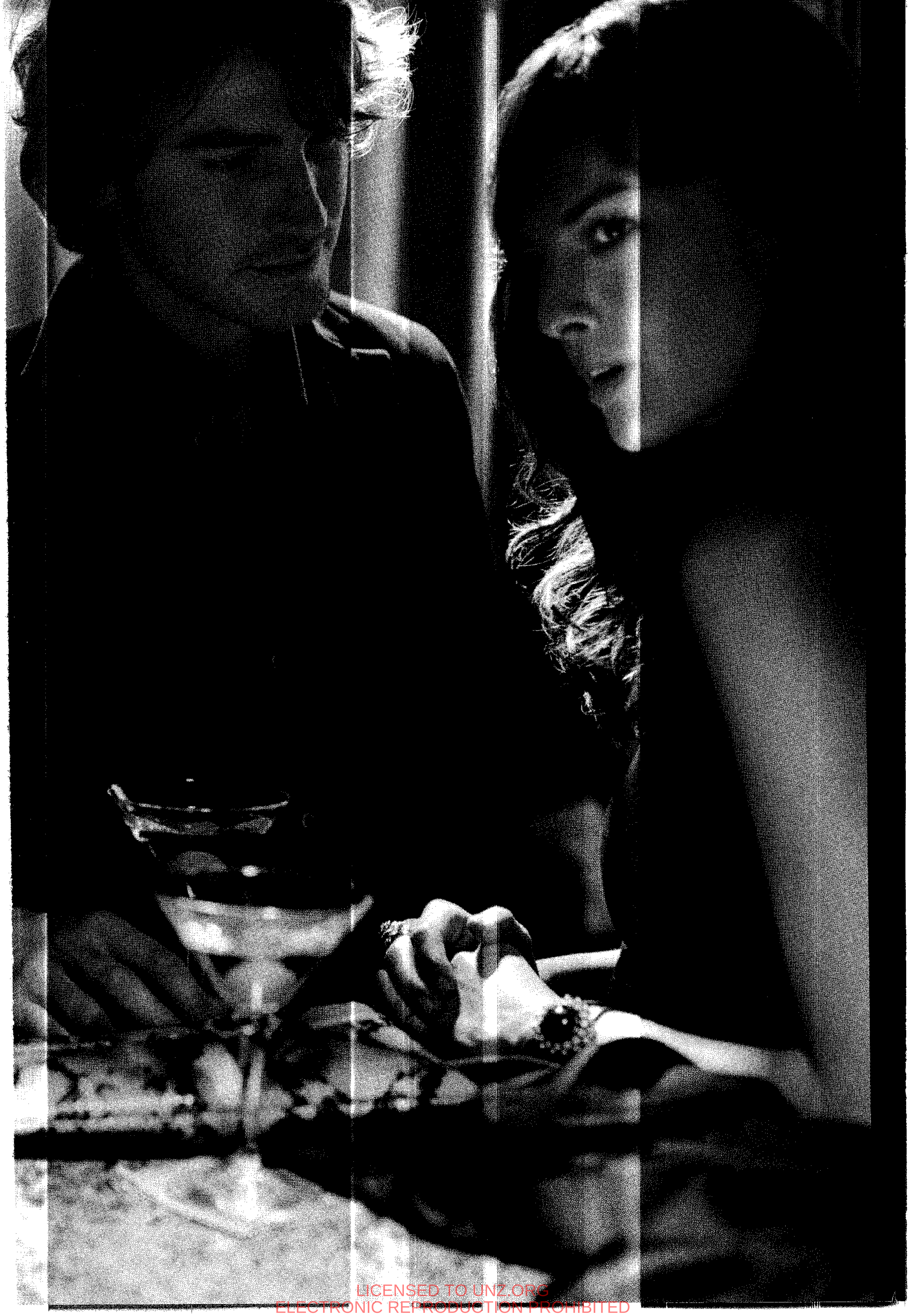

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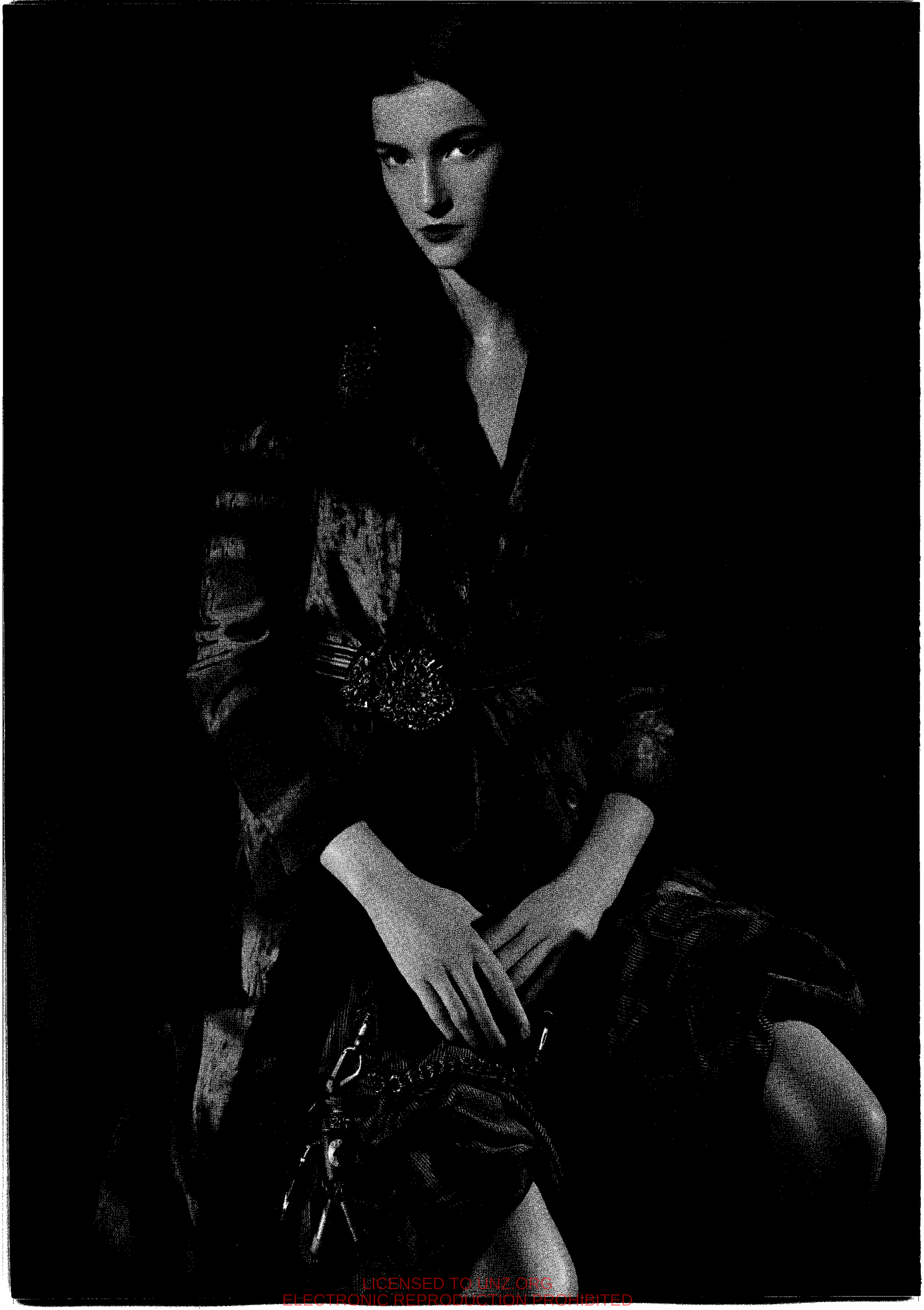

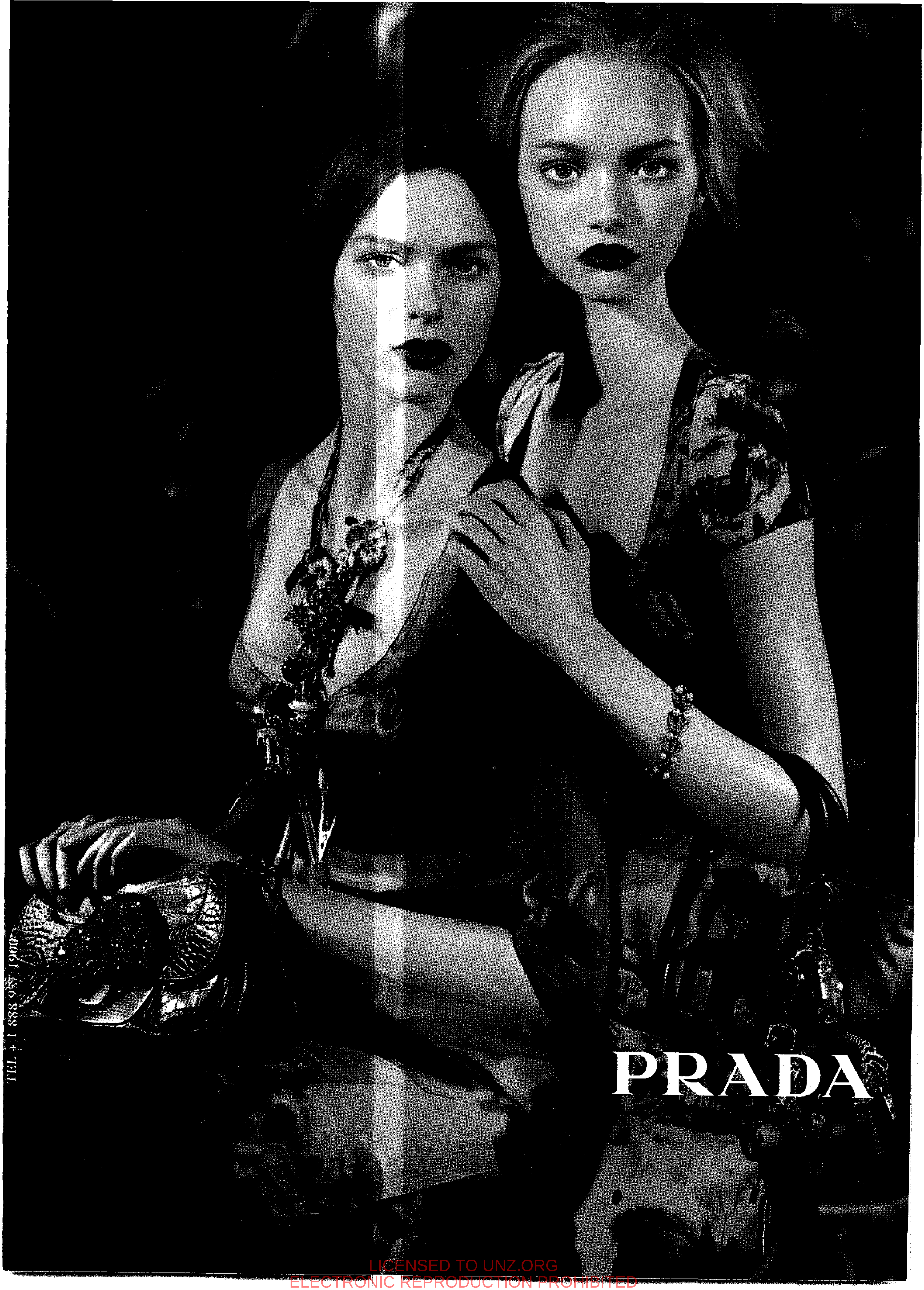
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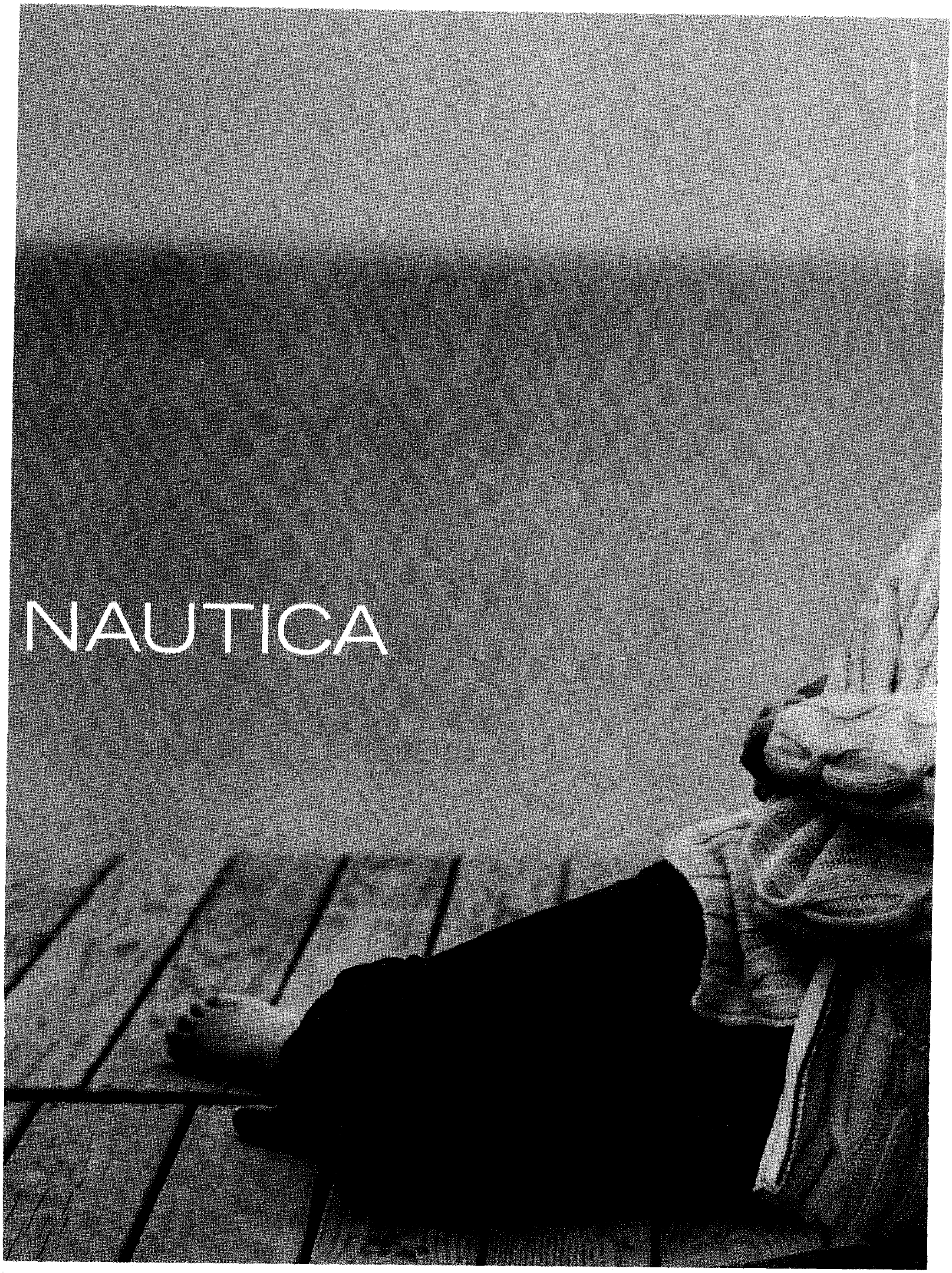
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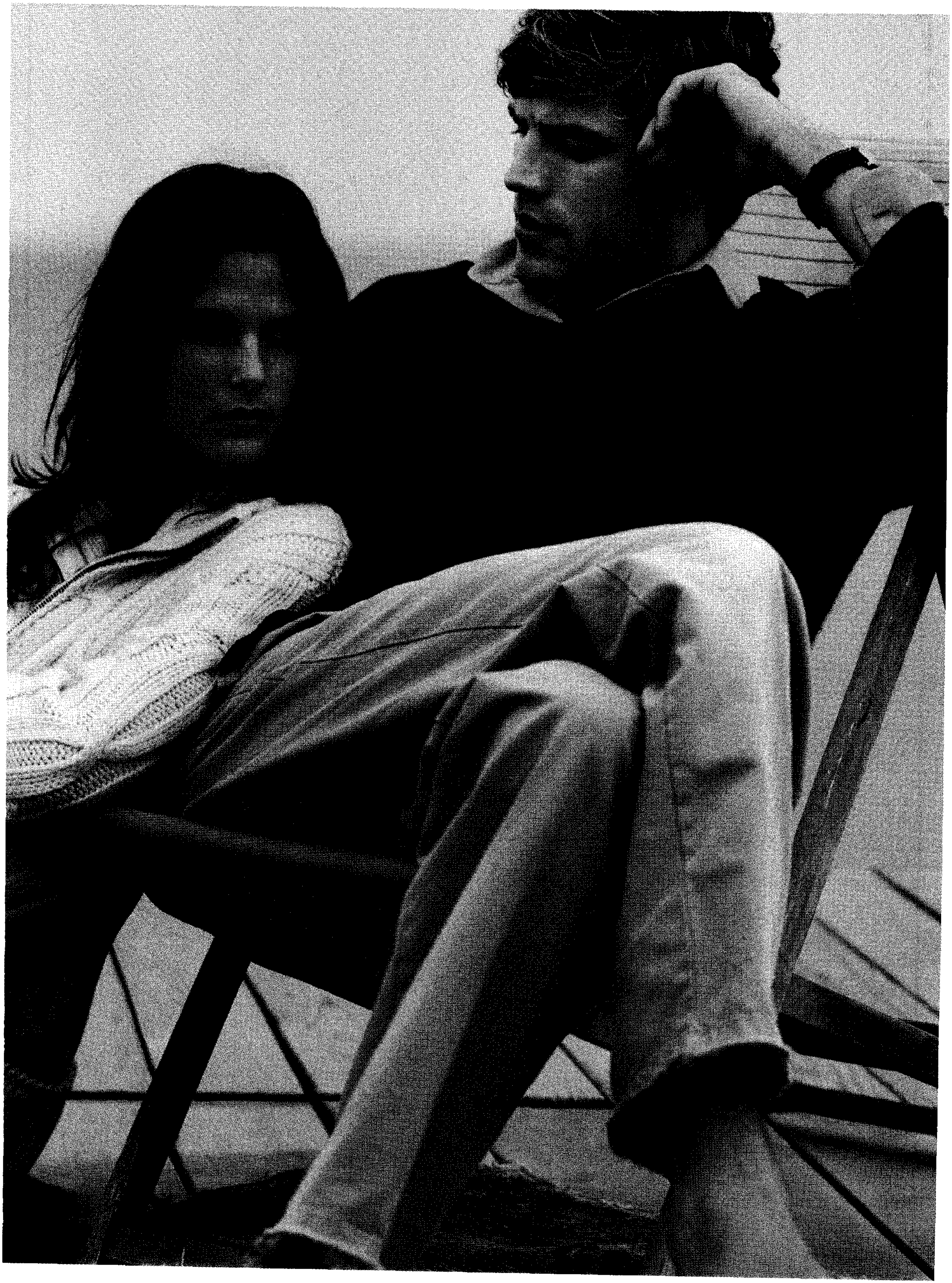

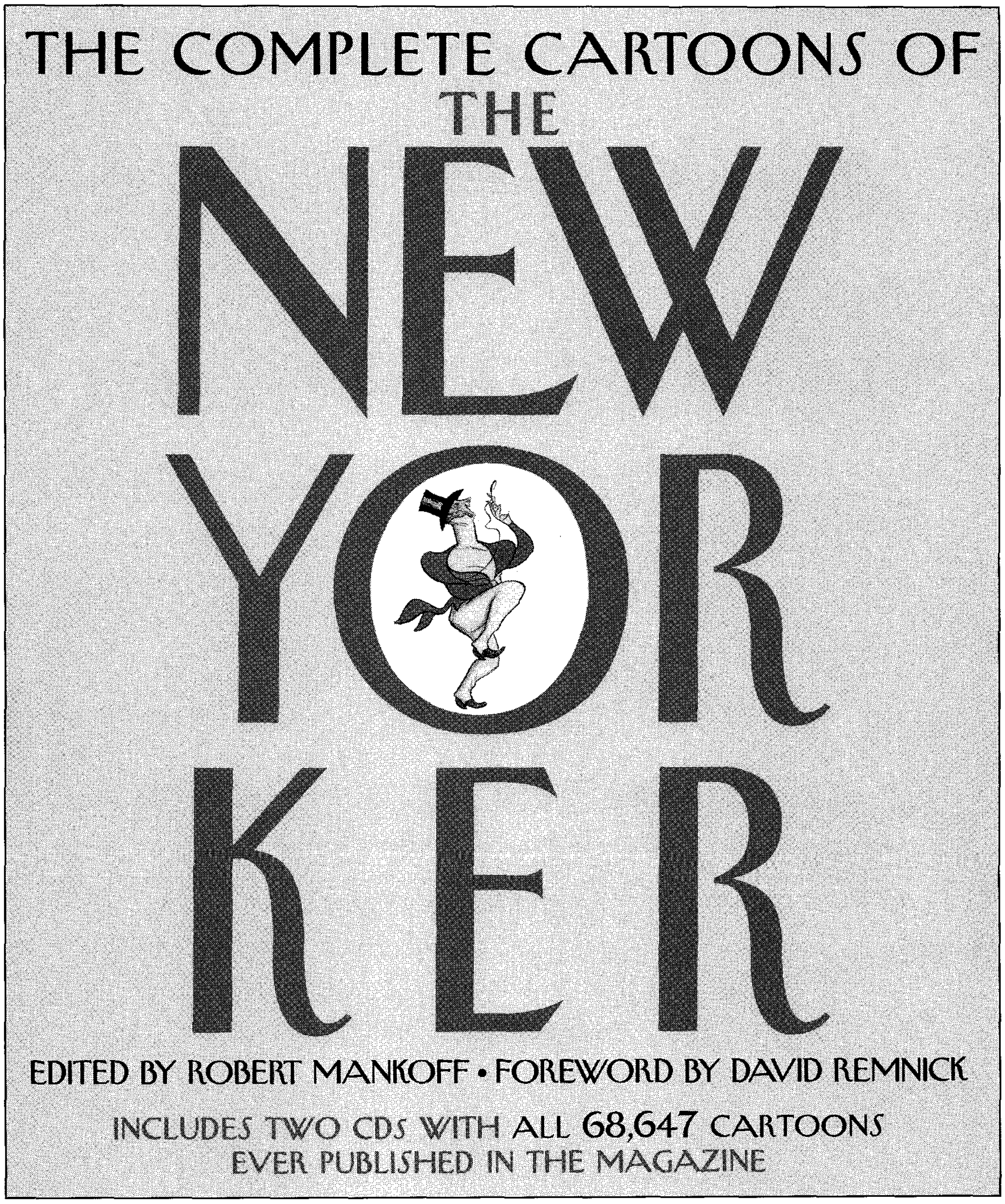

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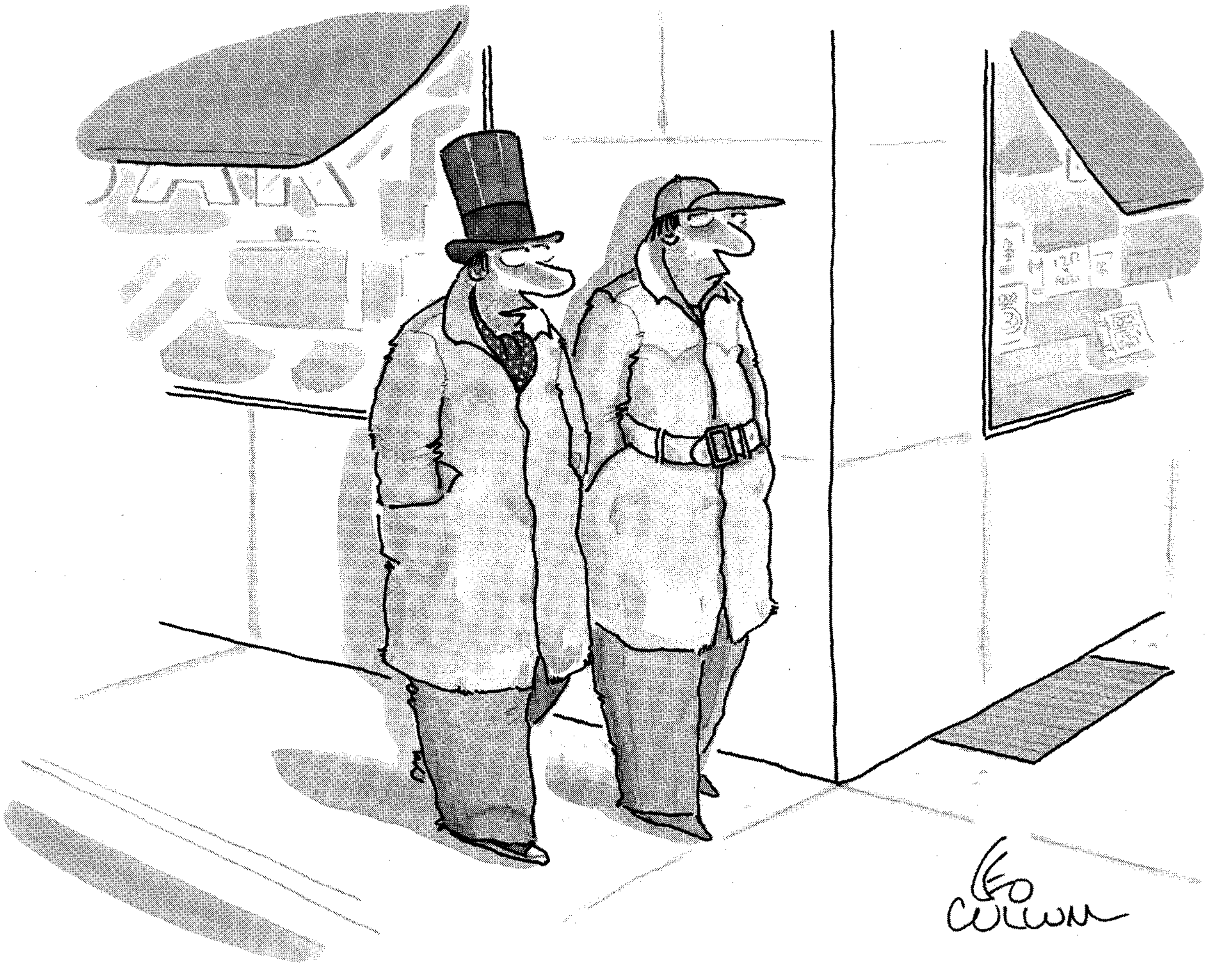

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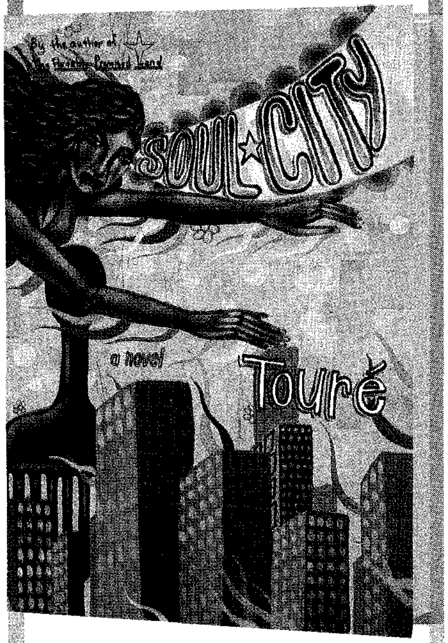
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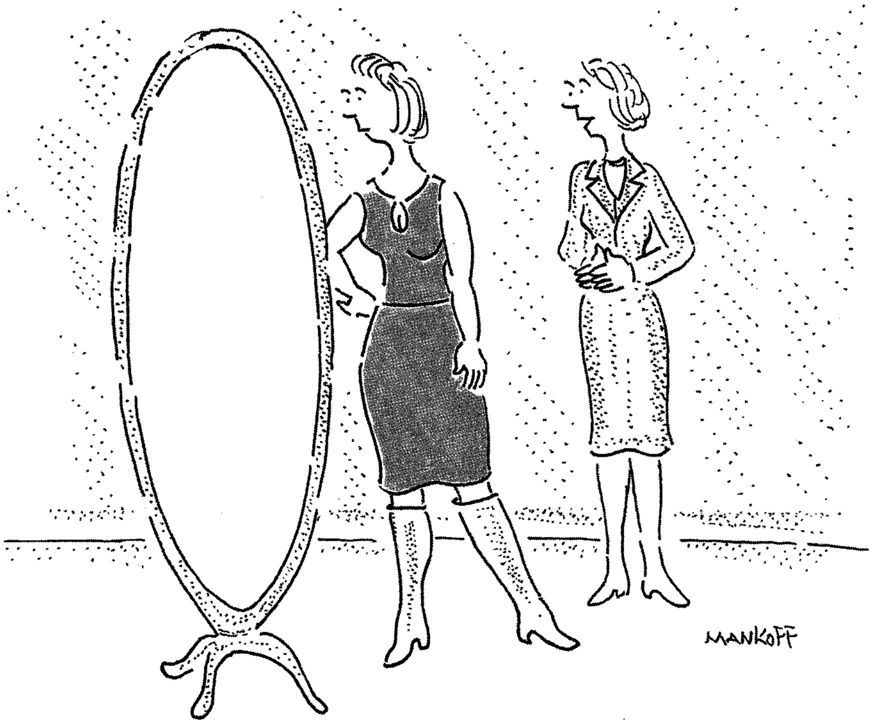
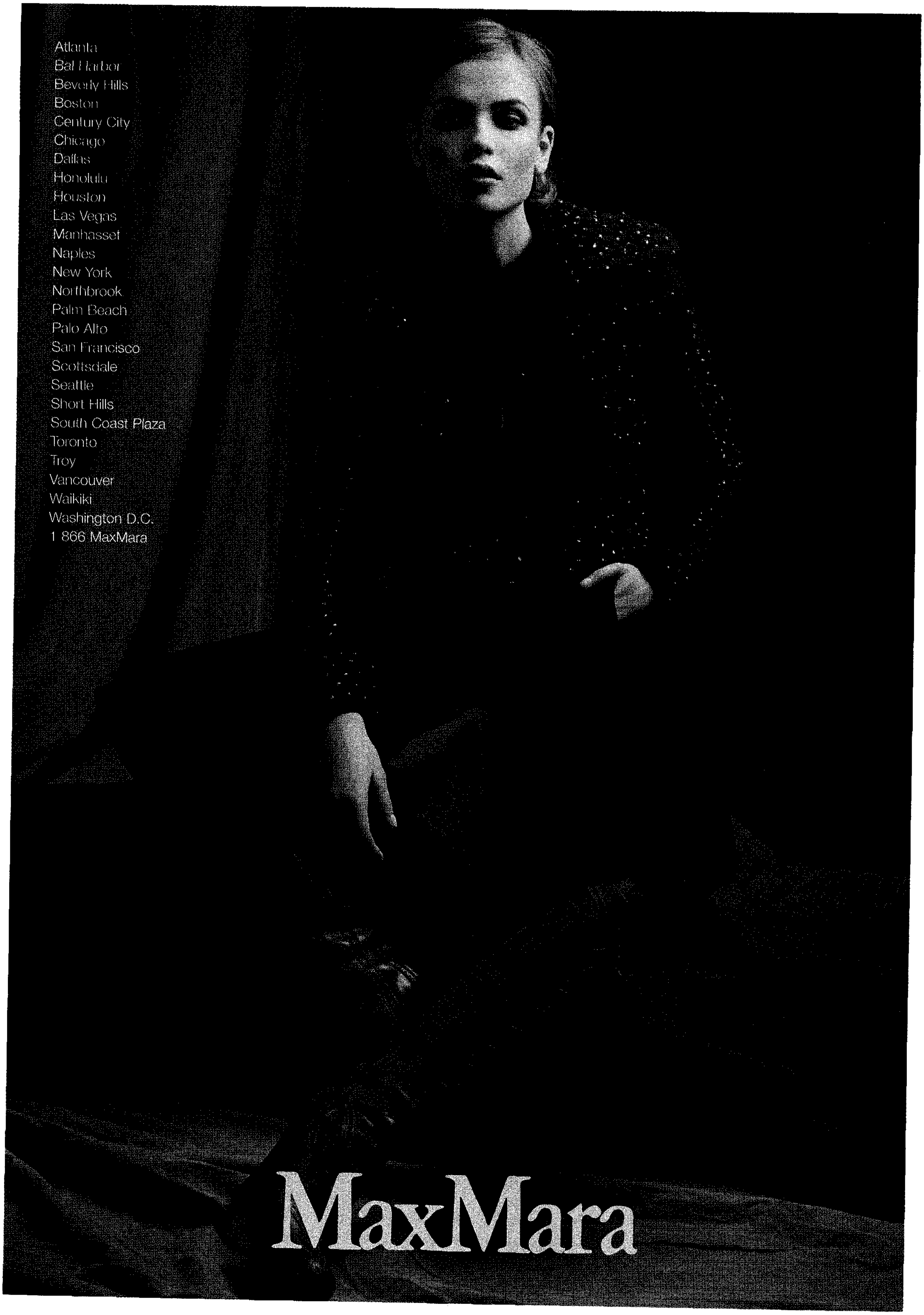
John Updike (Books, p. 150) is a regular contributor of fiction, poetry, and criticism. His new novel, "Villages," will be published in the fall.

John Lahr (The Theatre, p. 154), the magazine's senior drama critic, is writing a biography of Tennessee Williams.

Arnold Roth and Andy Borowitz (The Back Page, p. 160) contribute regularly to the magazine. ♦



"Trust me, detainee orange is going to be huge this fall."



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VOTING FOR TAXES

John Cassidy, in his examination of President George W. Bush's economic policies, does a good job of dissecting the Republican buzz words, like "culture of ownership," that have convinced so many potential voters that Bush's supply-side, low-income tax plan is a benefit to the middle class ("Tax Code," September 6th). The fact that those earning $1.2 million a year get about eighty thousand dollars back, thanks to the tax cuts, while someone in the fifty-thousand-dollar range gets about a thousand perfectly illustrates this point. The baby boomers who support Bush's plan seem not to have noticed that the Administration has not released budget projections beyond 2009. Perhaps when their retirement entitlements become as elusive as Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, these voters will finally begin to question the wisdom of neoconservative economics.
Jeff Robertson
San Bernardino, Calif.

Louis Menand, in his essay on the supposed irrationality of the voting public, seems to think that it is paradoxical for someone who believes that "the rich pay too little in taxes" to support the repeal of the estate tax, which benefits only two per cent of taxpayers (A Critic at Large, August 30th). Menand doesn't account for the possibility that voters may feel that it is unsavory and opportunistic for the government to retax property and income simply because the owner made the mistake of dying. There are many institutions that Americans oppose because they are unjust, and not because they are personally affected by them one way or the other.
Natalie Bush
Spanish Fork, Utah

HUNGRY EYES

The lard-and-soy-sauce soup that Yiyun Li's grandfather, who had survived famines and war, made when she was hungry brought back many memories ("The Man Who Eats," September 6th). During the Great Depression, my mother often stretched the family food budget by making "lard sandwiches" when we had nothing else to eat. In those days, lard was not considered a bad food. She would heat lard to a very high temperature, add some pieces of onion for flavor (she didn't know about soy sauce), and, when the onion was crispy, dip pieces of bread in the hot mixture. A little salt was then sprinkled on the lard-dipped bread. This concoction could be eaten hot, or two pieces could be put together to form a sandwich, which could go into a school lunchpail—not as good as the hot bread but edible, and it kept seven children going many an afternoon on long winter days at school. Mother's bread was homemade with flour from government distribution. We survived the Depression, and all of us have great respect for our imaginative mother.
Lillian M. Simms
Ann Arbor, Mich.

NATIVE FISH

I have lived away from South Africa for forty-two years, and have never stopped pining for the native treats that Calvin Trillin writes about in the Food Issue, especially snoek ("Dissed Fish," September 6th). Once, I found some smoked snoek that someone had imported to Israel, but I remember it as being somewhat *pap.* Peppermint Crisps and Peck's Anchovette are now, thankfully, available here. However, I must quibble with Trillin about Mrs. H. S. Ball's Chutney, or, rather, with his friend Jeffrey Jowell's lack of feelings for it. I have never met an ex-South African who does not pine for that product.
Meera Jacobson
Nathanya, Israel

•

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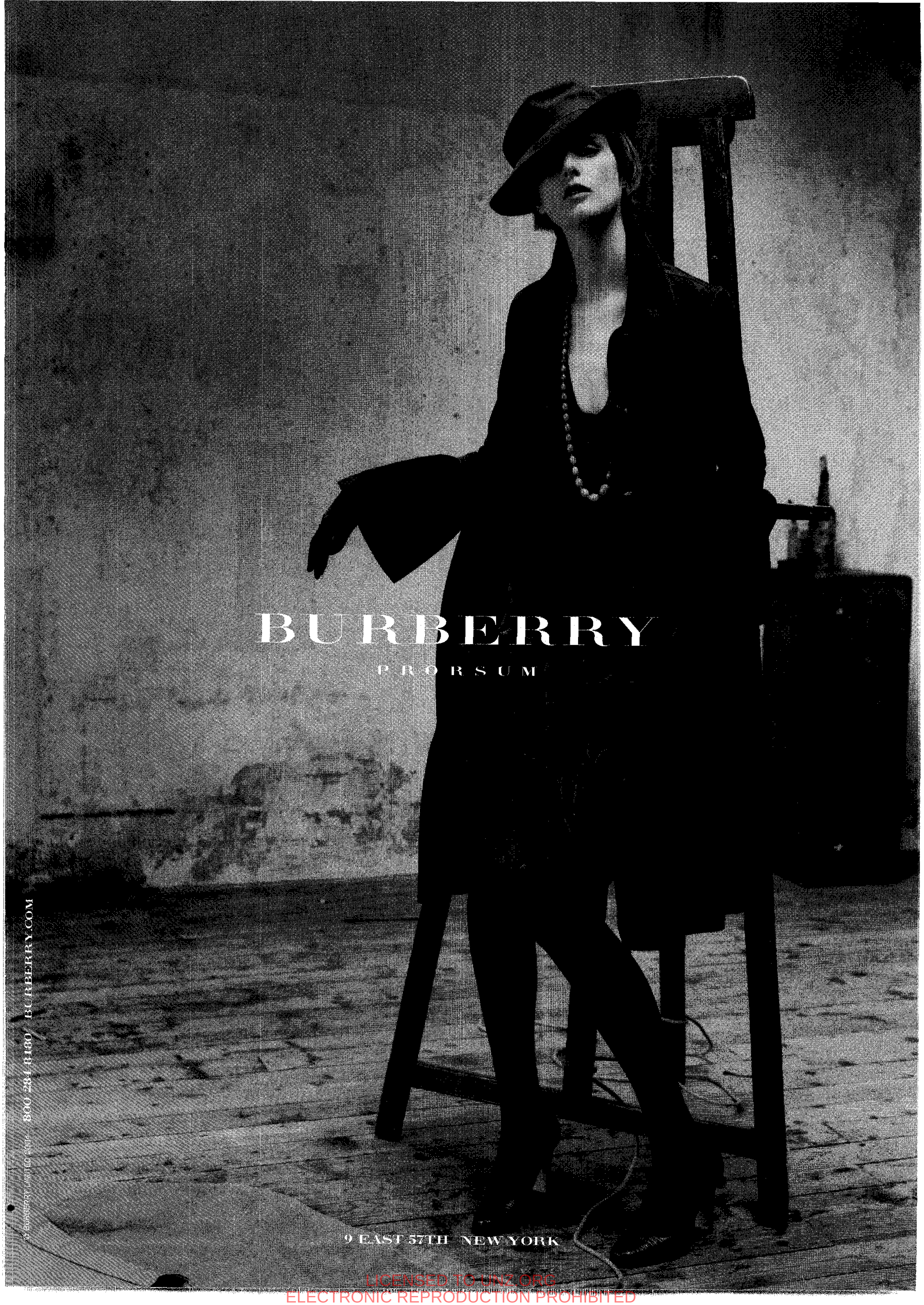
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

FALL PREVIEW

THE THEATRE

The best theatre this fall is the election, and few productions on or off Broadway can compete, although several try. George W. Bush gets the Karen Finley treatment in "George & Martha," which imagines the President and Martha Stewart as players in a loose adaptation of Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" Another President, Richard Nixon, is remembered in a new one-woman show, "Dirty Tricks," in which Judith Ivey plays Martha Mitchell, the loose-lipped wife of John Mitchell, Nixon's attorney general during the Watergate scandal. Joanna McClelland Glass's "Trying" sketches a portrait of Francis Biddle (Fritz Weaver), an attorney general for Franklin Delano Roosevelt and a judge at the Nuremberg trials. Michael Frayn's "Democracy," a Cold War drama set in West Germany, pays tribute to Chancellor Willy Brandt. Time-honored cautionary tales about the abuses of power are never far from the stage; Shakespeare's "Richard III," starring Peter Dinklage, is now in previews at the Public. And "Lysistrata," performed by the National Theatre of Greece, plays at City Center for a week in early October.

For those who have had their fill of politics, there's other fare. Caryl Churchill's human-cloning drama, "A Number," coming to New York Theatre Workshop, stars Sam Shepard in his first stage appearance in three decades. Neil LaBute has a new play, "Fat Pig," about a man who is afraid to date an overweight woman. A revival of Craig Lucas's "Reckless," from 1983, stars Mary-Louise Parker as a woman who flees her home after her husband arranges to have her killed. The Roundabout is reaching back even further, reviving Reginald Rose's fifties drama "Twelve Angry Men"; Dan Hedaya and Larry Bryggman star. Brenda Blethyn and Edie Falco appear in a revival of another brooding drama, Marsha Norman's " 'Night, Mother." And in November August Wilson's "Gem of the Ocean," the ninth in his ten-play cycle of African-American life, tells the story of a matriarch (Phylicia Rashad) who sends a man on a spiritual journey to find a city in the middle of the Atlantic.

James Naughton and Richard Thomas star in Michael Frayn's "Democracy."

Musicals and comedies round out the season. Stephen Sondheim's "Pacific Overtures," from 1976, begins previews in mid-November with an Asian-American cast directed by Amon Miyamoto and led by B. D. Wong. As for new musicals, there's "Brooklyn," in which a young woman seeks the father she never knew amid Brooklyn's homeless population, and "Belle Époque," which evokes the flamboyant milieu of the Moulin Rouge at the time of Toulouse-Lautrec. With the exception of "Jewtopia" (a comedy about a Jewish bachelor who helps a Gentile friend marry a Jewish girl) and "700 Sundays" (Billy Crystal's autobiographical Broadway début), most of the laughs this season come from actors with foreign accents. The ruthless Australian hausfrau Dame Edna (Barry Humphries) returns to New York to heap affectionate abuse on her "possums" in "Dame Edna: Back with a Vengeance!" And in a revival of Larry Shue's "The Foreigner" Matthew Broderick co-stars with the marvellous Frances Sternhagen, playing a travelling auslander who speaks no English.

DANCE

The season opens with an ambitious audience-builder. At City Center, the "Fall for Dance" festival brings together thirty companies, showcasing five troupes per night—Ameri-

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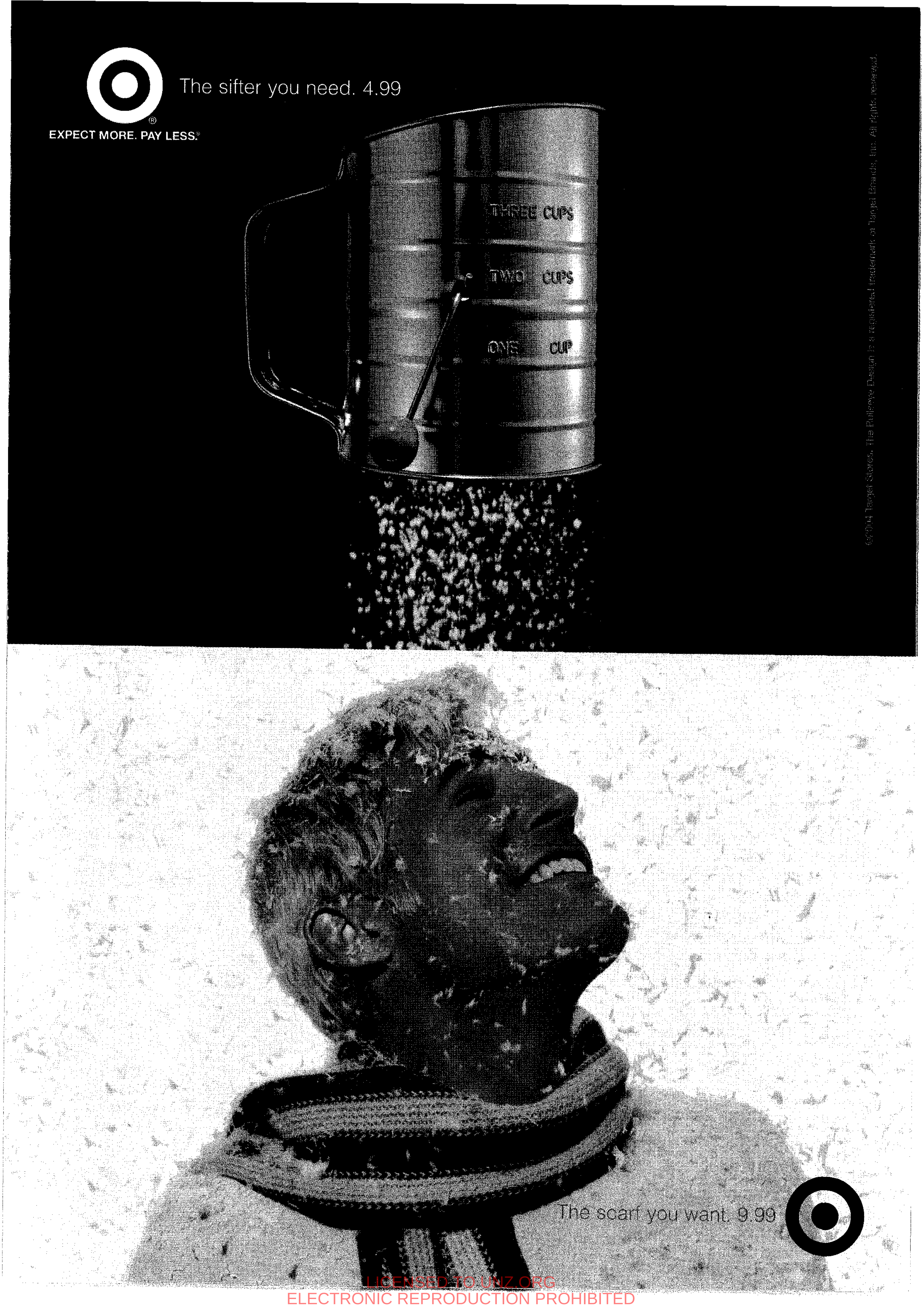
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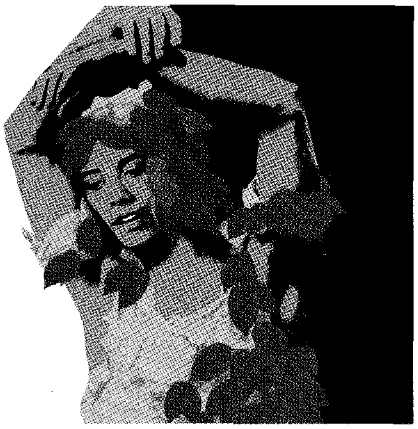
can Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Ballet Hispánico, and the Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, Trisha Brown, Bill T. Jones, and Sarah East Johnson companies, among others. Tickets are ten dollars, the same as a movie. And in November the "Jazz in Motion" celebration presented by Jazz at Lincoln Center brings together the tap master Savion Glover, New York City Ballet (in the new "Welcome," with music by Wynton Marsalis and choreography by Peter Martins), Elizabeth Streb's twenty-year-old troupe of highfliers (with the new "Gauntlet," set to music by Joe Chambers), and Garth Fagan Dance (performing excerpts from the company's eight-part "Griot New York," accompanied by the Wynton Marsalis Septet).



American Ballet Theatre offers "The Spectre of the Rose."

A.B.T.'s fall season spotlights the phenomenal Argentine dancer Herman Cornejo, who will perform the role that Nijinsky originated in 1911 in "The Spectre of the Rose" for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. A.B.T. also presents a new piece by Trey McIntyre and a reworked version of "VIII"—about King Henry VIII and his first two wives—by Christopher Wheeldon, moonlighting from his job as the resident choreographer of New York City Ballet.

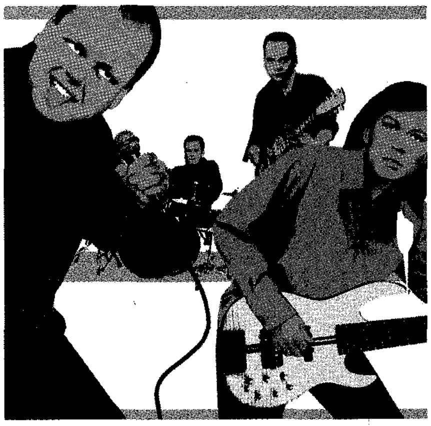
Many big guns have showcases of their own this fall. At the Joyce, Garth Fagan Dance presents new work in November, and the Merce Cunningham Company plays in December. At BAM, the long-awaited third part of Ralph Lemon's Geography Trilogy, "Come Home Charley Patton," arrives in October; in November, Pina Bausch and her Tanztheater Wuppertal present the nostalgic work "For the Children of Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," performed on a stage filled with sand, flooded with water, and strewn with red blossoms; and in December David Gordon presents his production of Ionesco's "The Chairs"—a duet for himself and his wife, the great, deadpan Valda Setterfield.

Also in December, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre has a month-long season at City Center, featuring "Love Stories," a new work in three parts set to music by Stevie Wonder and created by the company's director, Judith Jamison, Robert Battle, and the hip-hop-inspired Rennie Harris. In November at the New Victory, Harris will direct a season of his own, "Legends of Hip-Hop," joining old-school acts such as the Electric Boogaloos and the Rock Steady Crew with promising newcomers. This season, Danspace Project celebrates its thirtieth anniversary with a broad assortment of performances, including "The Happy Dance (or What Started Out O.K.)," by the downtown darling Monica Bill Barnes, and a tribute to Meredith Monk. To put us in the holiday spirit, the all-male Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo begins a two-week run at the Joyce on Dec. 21. The Trocks, with their delicately skewed versions of the classics, are as good as they have always been, though the absolute standout is Robert Carter, who (as Olga Supphozova) dances the female roles as well as most women would, raising many hard questions. Also look for the small, evil-faced Manolo Molina, who, as Igor Slowpokin, plays a number of male roles as if he were doing us a big favor.

NIGHT LIFE

As the night-club scene takes over the meatpacking district and Chelsea, the square footage devoted to clubs on the West Side rivals the explosion of new plots created by the Homestead Act. Lotus, the Fourteenth Street stalwart, is adding a new cocktail lounge this fall. Cain, on Twenty-seventh Street, will be decorated with the skins and horns of South African animals. Down the block, Bed, an offshoot of the popular Miami nightspot, will have a dining room full of goose-down-pillow-covered beds and a roof deck with citywide views. And the old Centro-Fly space, on Twenty-first Street, is being reborn as Duvet, which will have more than two dozen stylish mattresses.

The music scene is always slightly more inviting; there's no velvet rope, just a ticket-taker. Two punk-rock legends—Patti Smith and her band and Television—play Roseland in October. Also next month, Wilco sets up shop at Radio City Music Hall for two nights, the rapper Kanye West pairs with the soulful vocalist Usher at Madison Square Garden, and Brian Wilson, settling into Carnegie Hall for two nights, will perform songs from his long-lost epic, "Smile." But the biggest draw of the season is the reunion of the seminal alternative-rock band the Pixies. Local fans were disappointed when the Lollapalooza tour, which the Pixies were scheduled to headline, was cancelled this summer, but the band will play six shows here in December. Aficionados of global rhythms will enjoy the twentieth anniversary of the World Music Institute, which will be presenting Syrian Sufi groups, Japanese samisen masters, and Peruvian singers, among others.



The recently reunited Pixies play the Hammerstein Ballroom in December.

The big news in the jazz community is Jazz at Lincoln Center's lavish new home, in Columbus Circle. It has three separate venues, all of which are opening on Oct. 18. The largest, Rose Theatre, a beautifully intimate horseshoe-shaped space, can seat more than a thousand people; the opening performance features the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, along with Joe Lovano, Kenny Barron, Mark O'Connor, Cyro Baptista, Abbey Lincoln, and Marcus Roberts. The Allen

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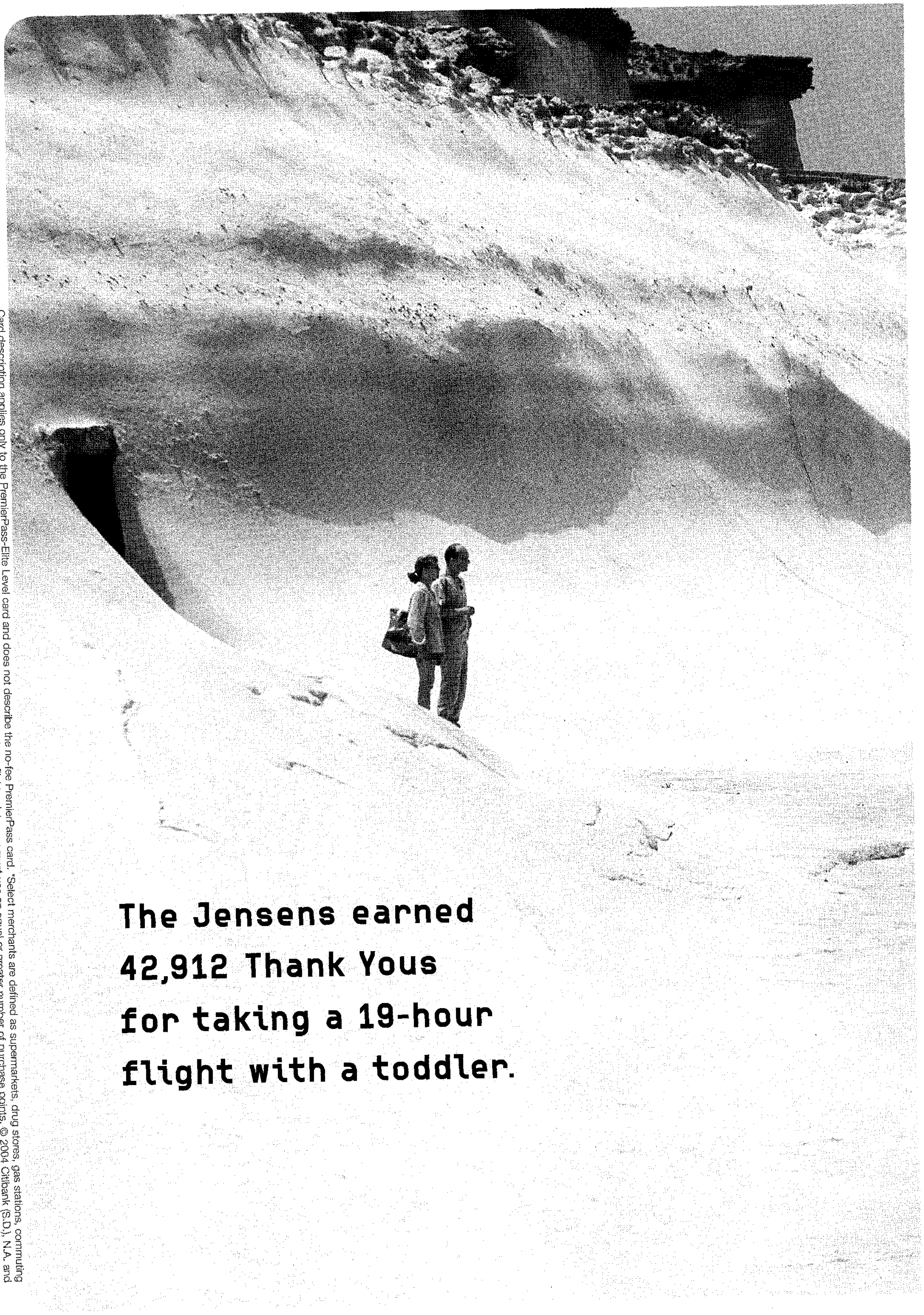

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Room seats five hundred people, all of whom can gaze at Central Park through a massive glass wall. There's room for dancing, and the Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra will perform. Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, a small, sleek space with curved bamboo walls, will be open every night; the pianist Bill Charlap christens it. Cassandra Wilson, Dianne Reeves, and Freddy Cole will all visit Columbus Circle later this season, and Wynton Marsalis and the house orchestra are taking on two monumental works: Duke Ellington's 1943 "Black, Brown & Beige," and "Kansas City Suite," which Benny Carter composed in 1960 for the Count Basie band.

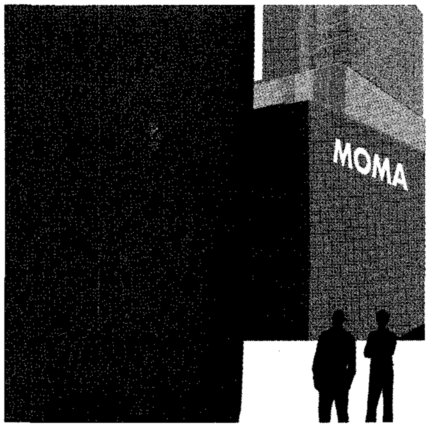
Respect must also be given to the more modest performances at New York's established downtown jazz clubs. The pianist Fred Hersch will spend a week at the Jazz Standard (Oct. 19-24) in a series of duets. And the Blue Note celebrates the centennial of the birth of the tenor patriarch Coleman Hawkins in late September with a large cast of horn stars, including Jimmy Heath, Joe Lovano, Frank Wess, James Carter, David (Fathead) Newman, David Sanchez, and Terrell Stafford.

ART

New York this fall is more than ever a museum city, its art life decreed by institutions. Looming like the harvest moon will be the reopening in new quarters, designed by Yoshio Taniguchi, on Nov. 20, of modernity's Vatican, the Museum of Modern Art. The modest shows on offer—devoted to Taniguchi's architecture, photography by Michael Wesely, and a conceptualist project by Mark Dion—have been calculated not to upstage the building, which stirs hopes and fears appropriate to a place that we will inhabit, spiritually speaking, from here on out.

The always audience-hungry Brooklyn Museum has a likely coup in "Great Expectations: John Singer Sargent Painting Children," opening in October. The plangent Sargent was sweetly sensitive to kids, even as he rigged them into pictures that mirrored the wishes of their socially strenuous parents. The Metropolitan goes political—not to be mistaken for controversial—with a retrospective of the founding portraitist Gilbert Stuart and "George Washington: Man, Myth, Monument." The South African artist William Kentridge's work will be on view starting Nov. 12; the pieces date from 1989 to 2001 and will include drawings, paintings, sculptures, prints, designs for the theatre, and charcoal animations.

The Met also swells a citywide celebration of Romare Bearden, complementing with a show of works on paper and tapestry, from Oct. 19, the Whitney Museum's Bearden retrospective, which débuts Oct. 14, and "In the Garden of Dreams: The Art of Romare Bearden," at ACA Galleries, starting Oct. 16. The Rubin Museum will throw open its renovation of the old Barneys in Chelsea, promising pretty much all Himalayan art all the time. Expect awed exhaustion at the Guggenheim, where "The Aztec Empire" will boast (deep breath) four hundred and fifty objects.



The Museum of Modern Art opens its renovated building in midtown.

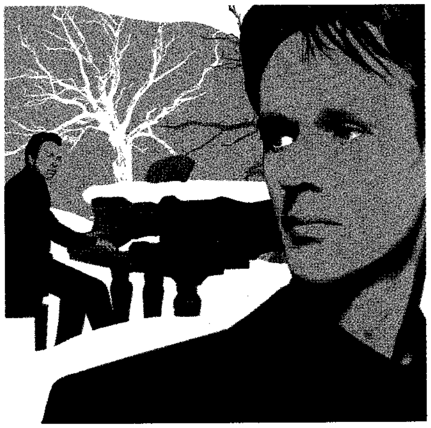
The Swiss prestidigitator of video and whatnot Pipilotti Rist chose the grim date of Sept. 11 for her opening at Luhring Augustine. Other shows charismatic for some art-world constituency or another include those of Jane and Louise Wilson at 303 Gallery, Ugo Rondinone at Matthew Marks, Rackstraw Downes at Cunningham, Jennifer Pastor at the Whitney, Louise Bourgeois at Cheim & Reid in late October, and "East Village USA" (are we nostalgic yet for the eighties?) at the New Museum in early December.

PHOTOGRAPHY

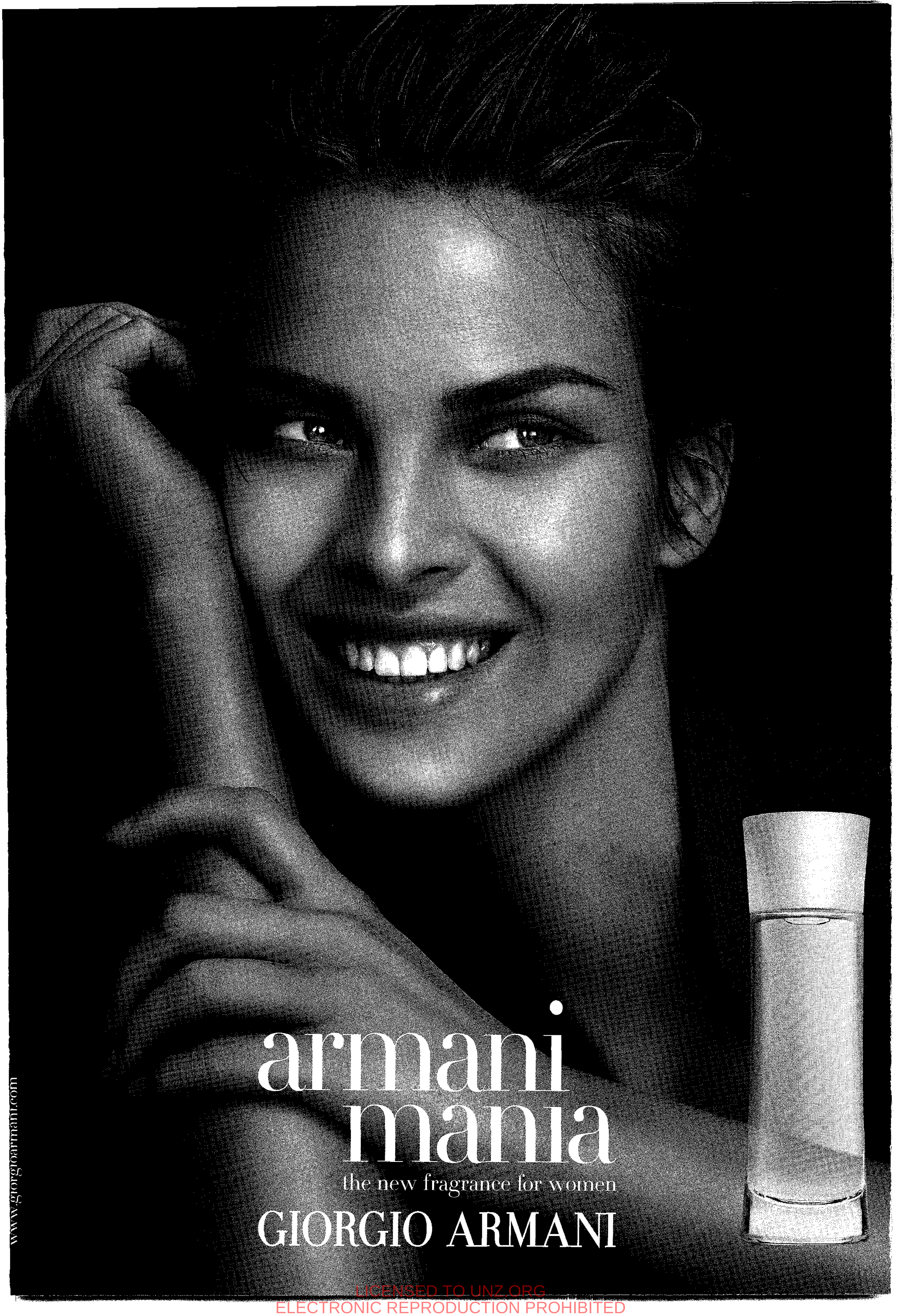
Women photographers dominate the fall scene. Alessandra Sanguinetti's "Adventures of Guille and Belinda and the Enigmatic Meaning of Their Dreams," a series of theatrical tableaux featuring two young cousins in the Argentine countryside, is at Yossi Milo. Ellen Phelan's digitally altered family snapshots, a companion to a concurrent exhibition of her recent paintings, is at Laurence Miller. Justine Kurland brings knights, maidens, and burned forests to Gorney Bravin + Lee. Candida Höfer's empty Dutch libraries and Renaissance Venetian palaces are at Sonnabend and the Goethe-Institut. Lynn Davis's new large-scale color photographs, most having to do with the exploration of space, including a satellite launch in French Guiana, are at Edwynn Houk. The influential German photographer and artist Katharina Sieverding has her first U.S. retrospective at P.S. 1. Deceased white males are represented by forty-four photographs printed from the original negatives of the late David Wojnarowicz's "Rimbaud in New York" series, shot in the late seventies, at Roth Horowitz.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

The fall season may not offer much novelty, but there is a wealth of favorites in new guises. None is more welcome than the veteran pianist Leon Fleisher, who lost the ability to play with his right hand in 1965. Fleisher is back to using both hands, and no pianist can wend his way through the counterpoint of a Bach prelude with more inner energy or hard-won grace. Symphony Space is devoting a two-day "Leoniade" to Fleisher that will include an evening of performance by and conversation with the pianist (on Oct. 7) and an all-day marathon of the Beethoven Piano Sonatas (on Oct. 9), performed by such current



Ian Bostridge and Leif Ove Andsnes, at Carnegie Hall.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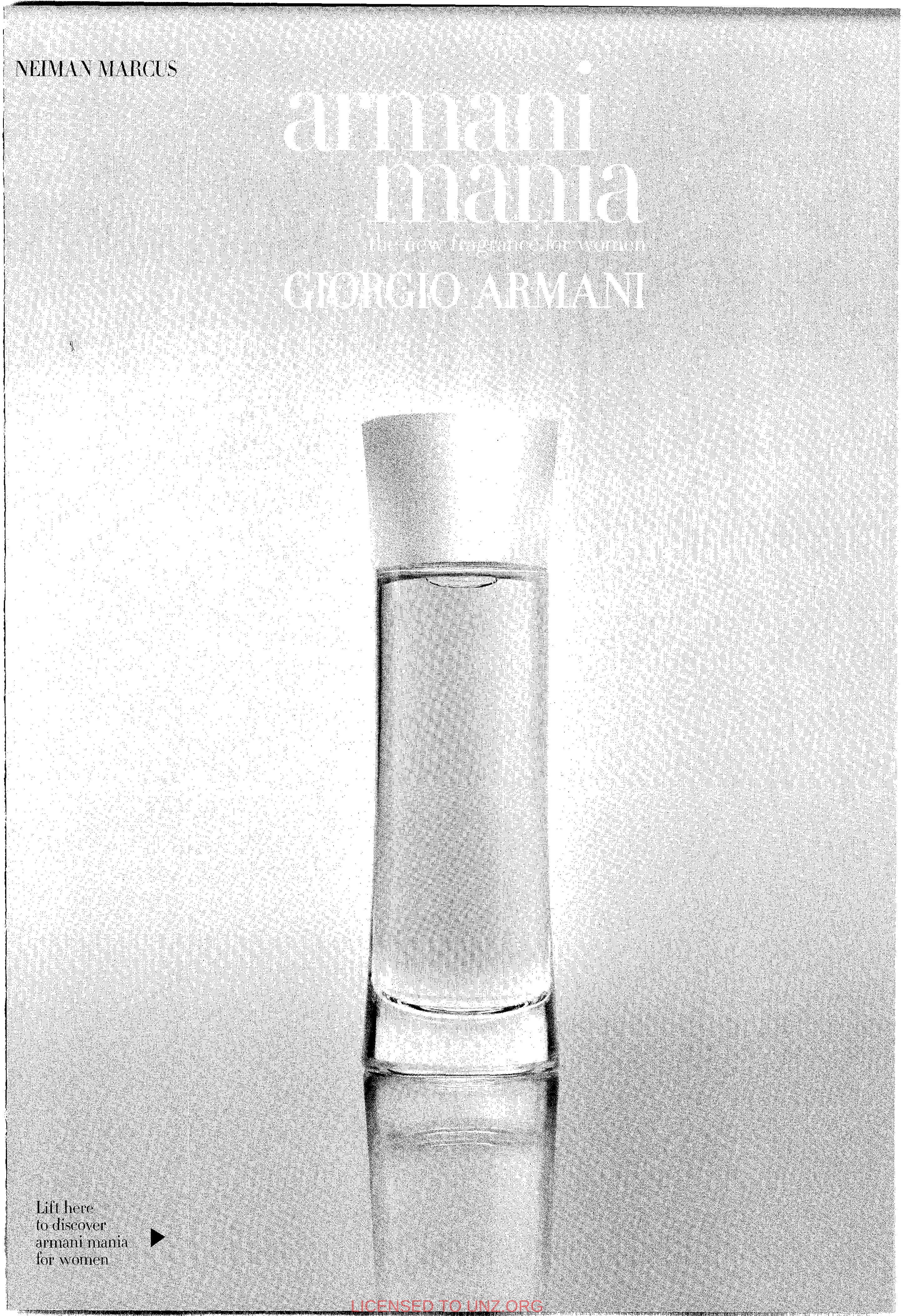
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and former Fleisher students as Jonathan Biss and Xak Bjerken. Another great pianist, Daniel Barenboim, can be maddeningly inconsistent, but he has a firm grasp of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier," and he'll play all of Book One at Carnegie Hall on Nov. 1.

An extraordinary New York Philharmonic program, beginning on Dec. 14, features two Philharmonic premières—that of the mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt Lieberson and of the piece she will sing, Britten's "Phaedra," a searing cantata on sex and suicide with a text (after Racine) by Robert Lowell; Colin Davis conducts. Lieberson will be in town early to sing in Berlioz's "Roméo et Juliette" at Carnegie Hall on Dec. 6, a concert in which James Levine, the ultimate musical New Yorker, brings his newly won Boston Symphony Orchestra to the city. Another major event at Carnegie will be a performance of Schubert's "Winterreise" on Oct. 16 by the tenor Ian Bostridge and the pianist Leif Ove Andsnes, together at Stern Auditorium for the first time.

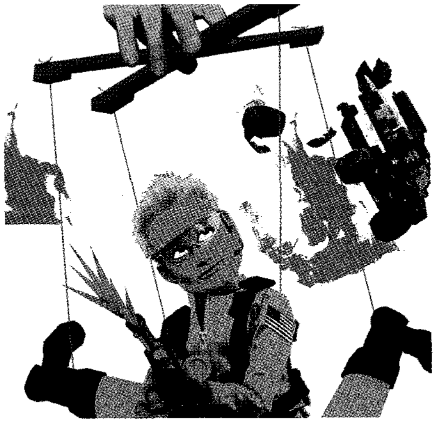
Great singing features prominently in the Great Performances Brahms festival at Lincoln Center, which includes recitals by the baritones Wolfgang Holzmair (on Oct. 17) and Simon Keenlyside (on Dec. 5) along with a performance of the "German Requiem" (on Nov. 8) by the soprano Twyla Robinson, the baritone Nathan Gunn, and the Dresden Philharmonic. If unfamiliar repertory is your game, there's always George Steel, whose Miller Theatre schedule includes evenings devoted to the music of such figures as the impish British modernist Michael Finnissy and the polyrhythmic American master Conlon Nancarrow.

Bill Murray in "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou," directed by Wes Anderson.

As usual, New York City Opera takes the prize for edgy programming: the world première of "Haroun and the Sea of Stories" (on Oct. 31) brings together the composer Charles Wuorinen, the director Mark Lamos, and the poet James Fenton, who has made a libretto from the fantastical children's novel by Salman Rushdie. More fantasy will reach the stage of the Metropolitan Opera on Oct. 8, with the opening of a new production of "Die Zauberflöte" by Julie Taymor, whose vision of Mozart's "Imaginary Egypt" will embrace set designs by George Tsypin, choreography by Mark Dendy, and the singing of Dorothea Röschmann, L'ubica Vargicová, Matthew Polenzani, and Matthias Goerne; Levine, back on home territory, conducts. But the jewel of the fall season is likely to be the December première of Handel's "Rodelinda," in which the national diva Renée Fleming will be joined by the Baroque conductor Harry Bicket and an unusually strong supporting cast that includes Stephanie Blythe, David Daniels, Bejun Mehta, and John Relyea.

MOVIES

In the next few months, moviegoers will get a chance to work out their complicated feelings toward Jude Law: English heartthrob or pretentious icicle? He appears in six films, starting with the sci-fi adventure "Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow." Law follows with "I ♥ Huckabees" (Oct. 1), an "existential" comedy from the writer-director David O. Russell; takes on the title role of "Alfie" (Oct. 22) in a remake of the Michael Caine film about a Cockney philanderer; anchors Mike Nichols's adaptation of Patrick Marber's play "Closer" (Dec. 3) as a writer involved with two women (Natalie Portman and Julia Roberts); narrates "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events" (Dec. 17); and finishes up with a small but spicy part in Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator" (Dec. 17), playing the swashbuckling Errol Flynn, who purportedly had an affair with Howard Hughes (Leonardo DiCaprio) before the mogul became a Las Vegas recluse.



Matt Stone and Trey Parker's "Team America: World Police."

Jean-Luc Godard, a bit of a recluse himself, has a new work that ponders war and modern civilization: "Notre Musique" (Nov. 24), opening at Film Forum. The downtown institution will also show Jonathan Caouette's "Tarnation" (Oct. 6), which includes video diaries that the filmmaker has kept since his early teens. Uptown, Pedro Almodóvar's "Bad Education," about a young transvestite (Gael García Bernal) who was abused by a priest as a young boy, will be the centerpiece of the New York Film Festival, which closes with a comedy from Alexander Payne, "Sideways" (Oct. 20), that follows two middle-aged men (Paul Giamatti and Thomas Haden Church) on a trip through California wine country.

Oliver Stone's "Alexander" (Nov. 5) examines the history of Alexander the Great. Trey Parker and Matt Stone, the creators of "South Park," send up the "war on terror" with an R-rated puppet movie, "Team America: World Police" (Oct. 15), that includes caricatures of the President, George Clooney, and Kim Jong Il. Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand are the lefty lawyer father and the sex-therapist mother of the unfortunate Gaylord Focker (Ben Stiller) in "Meet the Fockers" (Dec. 22). In James L. Brooks's "Spanglish" (Dec. 17), Adam Sandler plays a four-star chef who falls for his Latina housekeeper (Paz Vega). And Bill Murray is the eccentric heart of Wes Anderson's painstakingly crafted "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou" (Dec. 10). The comic actor plays a Jacques Cousteau-like figure leading a team of researchers on a search for the legendary jaguar shark. He'll be wearing a red knit cap and a Speedo.

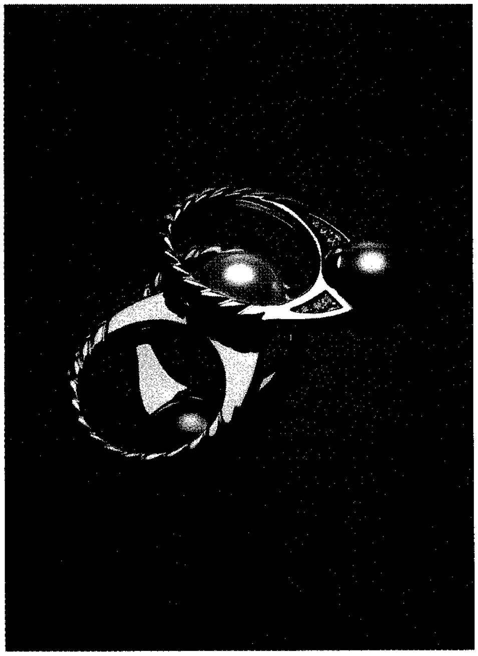
David Yurman's South Sea Collection

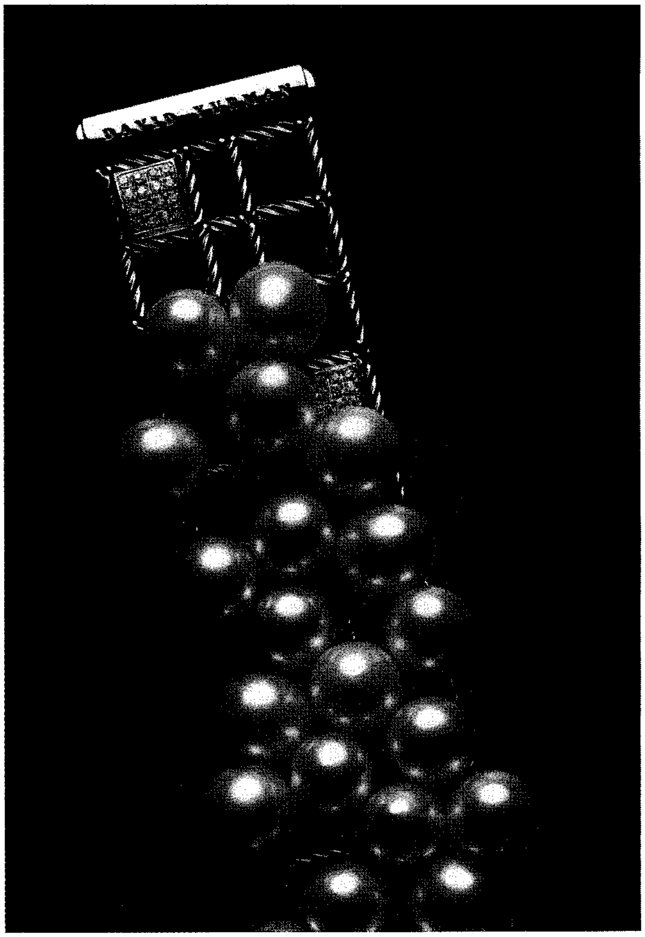
Pearls with Panache

One of the preëminent names in American jewelry design, David Yurman has turned his formidable talent to pearls. The designer's new South Sea Collection comprises more than two dozen styles of necklaces, bracelets, rings, and earrings, all artfully designed with cultured white Australian and black Tahitian pearls hand-selected and hand-polished to bring out their natural lustre.

Fully intending "to rock the traditional pearl boat a little" as he puts it, Yurman has used these remarkable pearls—each of which he considers a work of art—not just in combination with 18k. gold but with his signature sterling silver and diamonds as well. One-of-a-kind couture pieces round out the collection.

Says Yurman: "I am mesmerized by the unique beauty of pearls and they have always held a significant place in my heart. . . I am also fascinated by the science of the modern pearl and in awe of our ability to replicate nature to such a precise degree that not only do we fool the mollusk into doing what it does naturally, but with better, finer results than when left on its own."





The South Sea Collection in many ways represents a return to Yurman's design roots. He began his career nearly twenty-five years ago by working with pearls in combination with gemstone beads.

For this early work, Yurman was named "Pearl Designer of the Year" in 1982 by the International Pearl Association. More than two decades later, pearls are again a cornerstone of the designer's collection, where prices begin at $1,000 and top out at $25,000. "I believe that even the most precious of materials should have a certain accessibility and be a part of our relaxed, American luxury lifestyle," says Yurman. "Of course, fine pearls are beautiful, that's what first draws me—but it goes beyond that. Pearls are steeped in historical significance and romance. . . It's easy to admire their beauty. But to fully appreciate beauty, you must love and respect all forms of life."

For more information please visit davidyurman.com.

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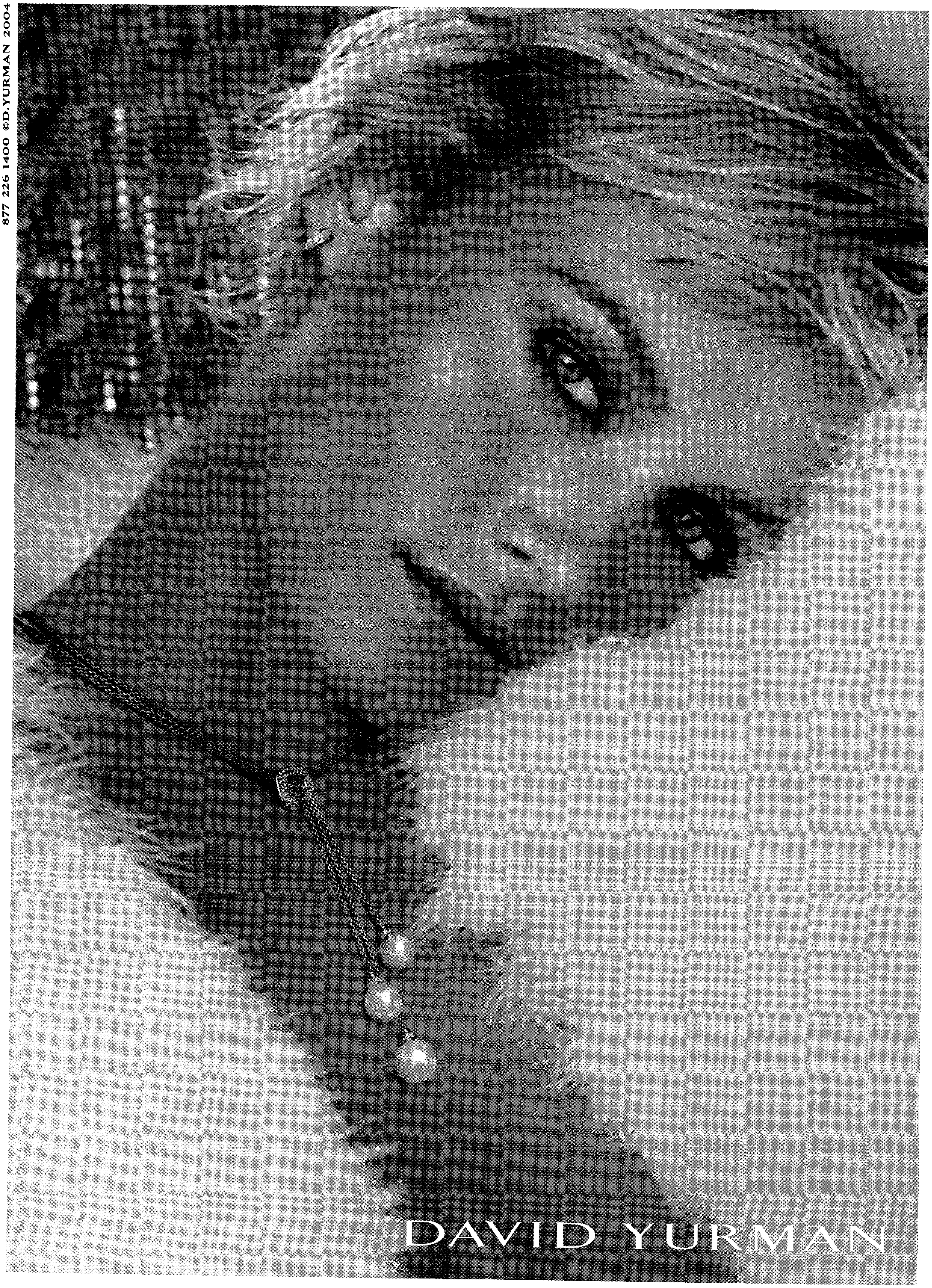
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NEIMAN MARCUS

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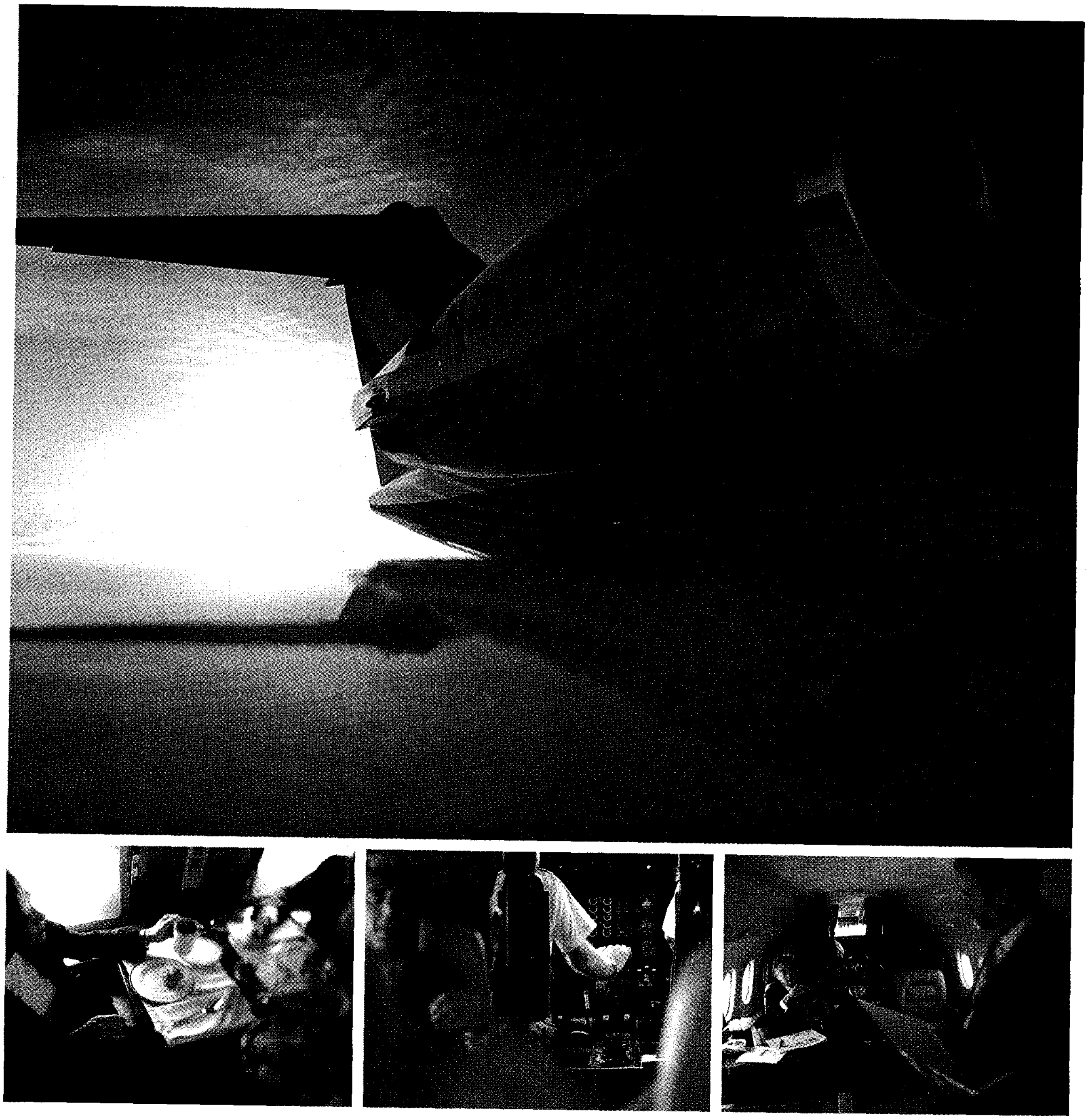

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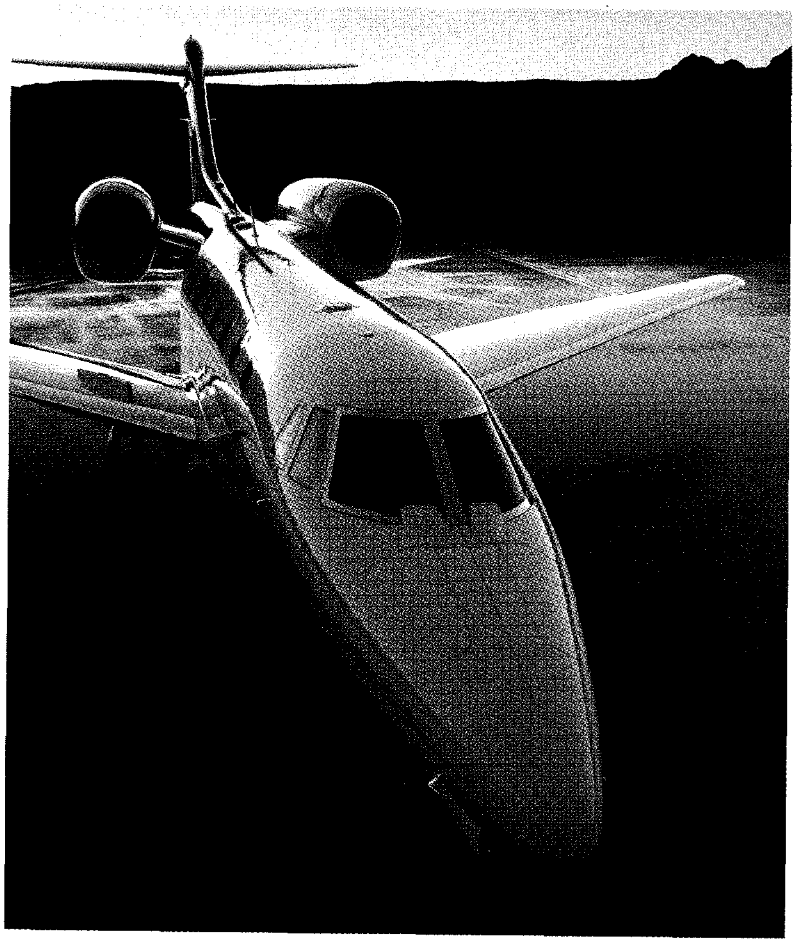

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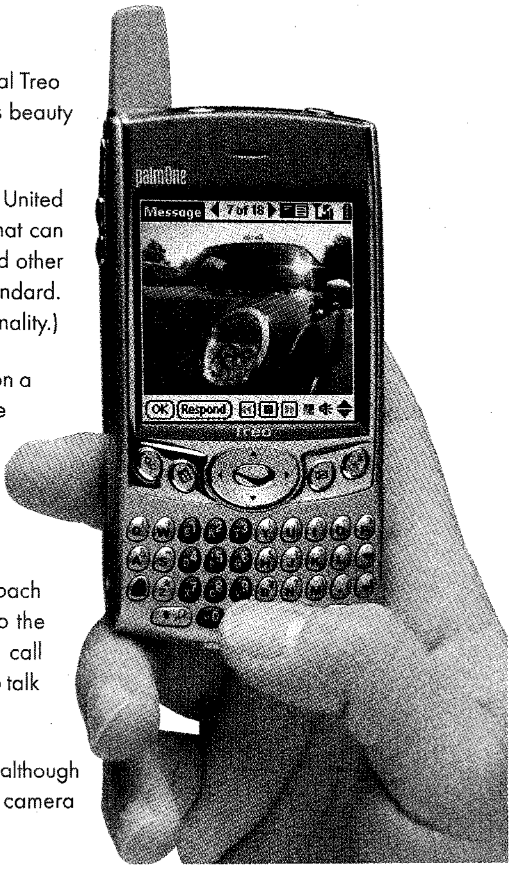
Treo™ 600 smartphone by palmOne | The Art of Organization



Beauty is more than skin deep. Just ask any owner of the stylish but functional Treo 600 smartphone. This highly praised wireless phone/handheld hybrid has beauty and brains in equal amounts.

The Treo 600 smartphone, which is sold by most national carriers in the United States, brings desktop e-mail to your hand, doubles as a wireless phone that can even be used overseas, and comes with the slick calendar, contact lists, and other personal features for which palmOne devices have set the mobile standard. (Optional voice and data service plan required for phone and e-mail functionality.)

What sets the Treo 600 smartphone apart is its design, which is based on a "form follows function" philosophy, says Ken Wirt, palmOne's senior vice president of worldwide marketing. "We did something that people said couldn't be done," he says, "by taking a mobile phone and adding a fully functional QWERTY keyboard that's easy to use without destroying the smartphone's appeal."

The Treo 600 smartphone's designers didn't take the Frankenstein approach either, piecing features together; everything in the device is integrated so the features work seamlessly. Examples include the ability to make a phone call directly from the contact list with a simple click, and the utility of continuing to talk while checking your calendar or reading an e-mail.

Style conscious? The Treo 600 smartphone looks like a wireless phone, although its color screen is large and bright, which pays off when using the integrated camera or surfing Web pages.

palmOne
11:44 am
All
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Calendar
Camera
Card Info
CityTime
HotSync
Mail
Memo Pad
MMS
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Prefs
Security
Treo

Becoming icons for our information age, palmOne devices are being featured in everything from music videos to starring in the motion picture "Little Black Book" with Brittany Murphy, Kathy Bates, and Ron Livingston, a film about a woman who uncovers her boyfriend's lascivious past digitally via his handheld. Likewise, the Treo 600 smartphone has drawn interest from global couture, which has designed lines of accessories for the device, including handmade leather cases by Vaja and Dooney & Bourke.

Innovative design goes beyond the smartphone's exterior, too—palmOne devices have attracted thousands of software designers with add-on applications for every use. One popular application, for example, lets you check flight schedules for more than seventy airlines. It's tools like this which make the Treo 600 smartphone both beautiful and smart.

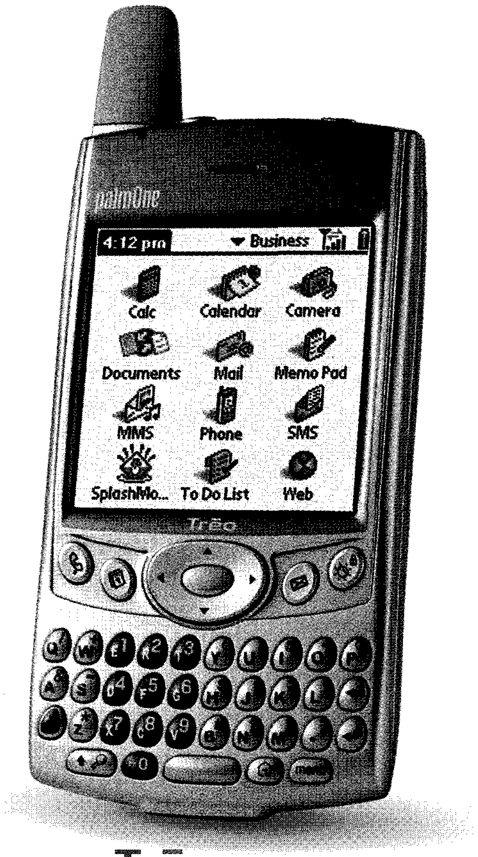
For more information, visit www.palmOne.com/treo600.

"The brilliant Treo 600... is the gold standard in smart phones."
–The Wall Street Journal

"One of the first 'smart' phones that lives up to the description."
–The New York Times

"The Treo 600 sets a new standard."
–BusinessWeek

This is huge.



Trēo™ 600

As you can see, the new Treo™ 600 smartphone from palmOne has been a big hit with some very big names. Which isn't surprising when you consider what you're looking at. It's a full-featured mobile phone that's also a Palm Powered™ organizer and a digital camera. And with a choice of wireless service providers the Treo 600 offers email, text messaging, and web browsing. But the biggest news is that all this comes in a small, sleek device you can slip in your pocket and stay connected wherever you are. And that really is huge. To find out more, go to www.palmOne.com or visit your local service provider.

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THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BROOKLYN, THE MUSICAL
A young *Parisienne* named Brooklyn seeks fame and her long-lost father in a new musical set in her namesake borough. Book, music, and lyrics by Mark Schoenfeld and Barri McPherson. Directed by Jeff Calhoun. Previews begin Sept. 23. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
The lunch-hour theatre reading series begins its fall season. Highlights include "Nightingale," written and performed by Lynn Redgrave, and plays by Harold Pinter, Shirley Jackson, and George Bernard Shaw read aloud by Marcia Gay Harden, Treat Williams, Kathleen Turner, and others. Begins Sept. 20 at 12:30, with Arthur Miller's "A Memory of Two Mondays." (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. 212-362-2560. For detailed information, visit www.foodforthoughtproductions.com.)

JEWTOPIA
A comedy by Bryan Fogel and Sam Wolfson about a Gentile whose Jewish best friend teaches him how to get a Jewish wife. Directed by John Tillinger. Previews begin Sept. 28. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 212-239-6200.)

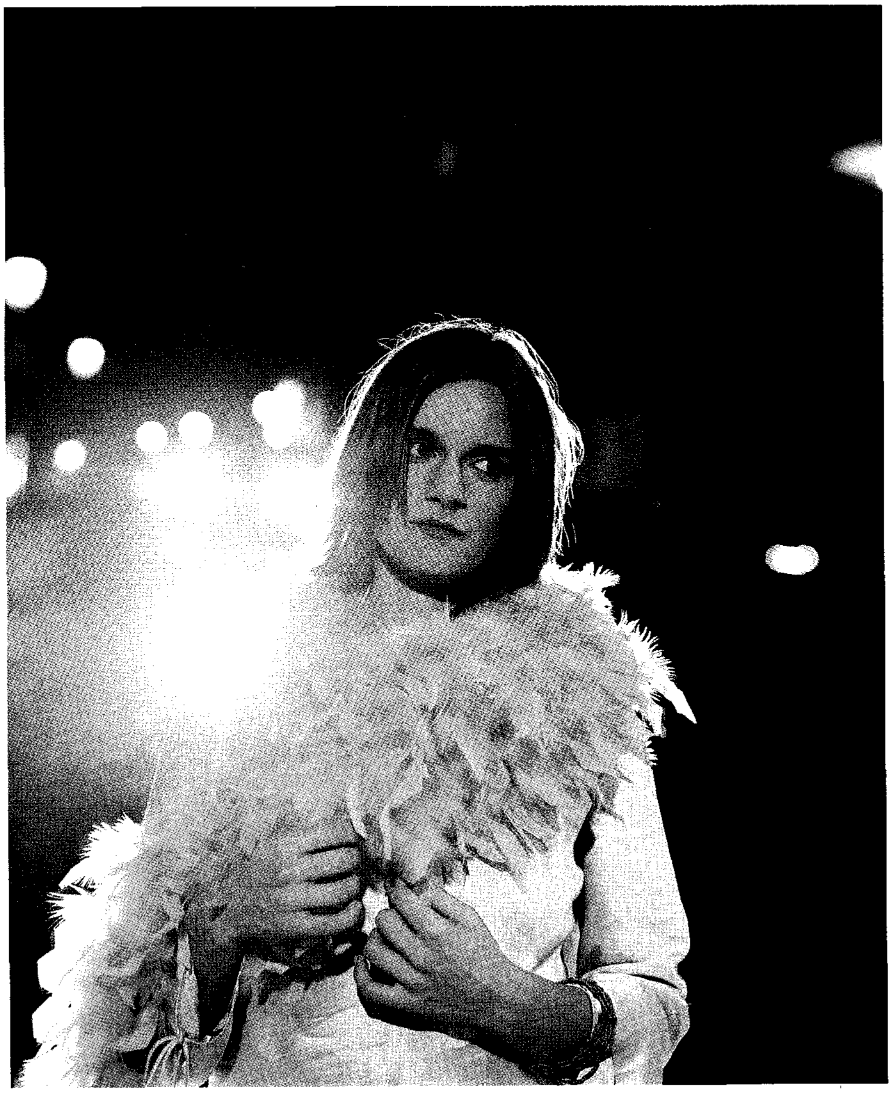
LAST EASTER
M.C.C. presents a new play by Bryony Lavery ("Frozen"), about three people who take a terminally ill friend to Texas and Lourdes in search of a cure. Directed by Doug Hughes. In previews. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-279-4200.)

NOBODY'S LUNCH
The Civilians, an Obie-winning company, present a show about the politics of information. Written and directed by Steven Cosson, with songs by Michael Friedman. Previews begin Sept. 24. (P.S. 122, First Ave. at 10th St. 212-477-5288.)

PEOPLE BE HEARD
Erica Schmidt ("Debbie Does Dallas") directs a new musical comedy, with songs by Quincy Long and music by Michael Roth, about a small town caught up in a heated debate about evolution. Choreographed by Peter Pucci. One preview on Sept. 22. Opens Sept. 23 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

RECKLESS
Manhattan Theatre Club presents the Broadway première of Craig Lucas's 1983 play about a woman who flees when she learns her husband has taken out a hit on her. Starring Mary-Louise Parker and Rosie Perez. Directed by Mark Brokaw. Previews begin Sept. 23. (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.)

RICHARD III
Peter Dinklage plays the king in the Public's season opener. Directed by Peter DuBois. Previews begin Sept. 21. (425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200.)



Madeleine Peyroux appears at Le Jazz au Bar (see Night Life).

ROBERTO FRANKENBERG

STRING OF PEARLS
Antoinette LaVecchia stars in a Primary Stages production of a play by Michele Lowe about a necklace that disrupts the lives of the people who come in contact with it. Directed by Eric Simonson. In previews. Opens Sept. 28 at 8. (59E59 Theatre, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

TRYING
A play by Joanna McClelland Glass based on the twilight years of Francis Biddle (Fritz Weaver), an F.D.R.-era attorney general and a judge at the Nuremberg trials, who has a battle of wills with the young secretary (Kati Brazda) his wife has hired to put his office in order. Directed by Sandy Shinner. Previews begin Sept. 28. (Promenade Theatre, Broadway at 76th St. 212-239-6200.)

WHITE CHOCOLATE
In a satirical play by the longtime *New Yorker* cartoonist William Hamilton, a white Park Avenue couple wake up and discover they've become black. Reg E. Cathey, Nora Dunn, and Lynn Whitfield lead the cast. Directed by David Schweizer. In previews. (Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200.)

WOMEN ON THE VERGE
Two middle-aged Irish groupies journey to Donegal to hear their handsome idol sing, in a comedy by the Irish playwright Marie Jones. Directed by Lynne Taylor Corbett. Previews begin Sept. 23. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 212-868-4444.)

OPENED RECENTLY

ATLANTIC THEATRE COMPANY
The fall season opens with two one-act plays by Eugène Ionesco, "The Bald Soprano" and "The Lesson," in new translations by Tina Howe. Featured in the cast are John Ellison Conlee ("The Full Monty"), Michael Countryman, Seana Kofoed, Jan Maxwell, and Steven Skybell. Directed by Carl Forsman. (336 W. 20th St. 212-239-6200.)

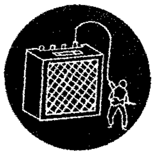
BRIAN DYKSTRA: CORNERED & ALONE
Brian Dykstra says that his one-man show might have been called "Whips and Cheney" or "Rumsfeld and Coke," but he opted for a subtler approach. He warms up the crowd with Dr. Seuss-y hip-hop rhymes before letting loose with a bitterly funny barrage of home truths about the plight of American liberals in a country whose foreign policy, Dykstra observes, increasingly resembles a movie: "Predator vs. Alien." Directed by Margarett Perry. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 212-352-3101.)

DRACULA, THE MUSICAL
When he enters the stage, wearing a long maroon brocade robe with cascades of ruffles at his neck and cuffs, his hair swept into a high white pompadour, the old neck-biter (Tom Hewitt) looks like a demented granny. After his first blood feast, his hair turns raven black. This is the first in a stream of tricks (flying nymphets, sliding doors, pop-out breasts) that whiz by in this new musical, which has been paced to hold the attention of a *Buffy*-loving, television-watching audience. The show is not exactly boring: Kelli O'Hara, as Lucy, is fun to watch when she bares her fangs at a child; Melissa Errico, as Mina, sings well but seems more zombie than vampirette; and Don Stephenson is funny as an insect-gulping madman. But it is exceedingly silly. With book and lyrics by Christopher Hampton and Don Black and music by Frank Wildhorn. Directed by Des McAnuff. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

FINER NOBLE GASES
A group of once successful rock musicians wallow in drugged-out apathy in an East Village apartment, in a play by Adam Rapp. Directed by Michael Garcés. (Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre, 224 Waverly Pl., west of Seventh Ave., between W. 11th and Perry Sts. 212-868-4444.)

THE FIRST (AND LAST) MUSICAL ON MARS
In a show written, directed, and composed by George Zarr (who writes for television's Sci Fi Channel), an earthling who has been kidnapped by the king of Jupiter is ordered to produce a musical on Mars. If he fails, Earth will be destroyed. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 212-645-6910.)

POP NOTES



AMERICAN BANDS
The Black Keys are Dan Auerbach, the singer and guitarist, and Patrick Carney, the drummer; the pair hail from the industrial wasteland of Akron, Ohio, and play an amped-up blues-rock. This is the same setup, more or less, as the White Stripes, but it's even sparer: the Black Keys don't have a color scheme, sexual tension, or a blurry, mythologized past. Previously, the Black Keys were more successful in concept than in execution, but on their third album, **"Rubber Factory"** (Fat Possum), Auerbach's songwriting blooms. The first single, "10 A.M. Automatic," has one foot in late-sixties caveman garage rock and the other in early-seventies arena rock; "The Lengths" is a lovely, gently weeping ballad; a sly cover of the Kinks' "Act Nice and Gentle" demonstrates their reach and their grasp of classic-rock history. Direct, consistent, powerful, and loud, the record is one of the best rock releases of the year.

John Fogerty's new album, **"Déjà Vu All Over Again"** (Geffen), doesn't start promisingly. The title is corny; the title song, added at the last minute as a response to the Iraq war, is pretty but familiar (as the title suggests); and the clunky package design is the kind of thing that shouldn't happen to a major artist. That's the bad news. The good news is that Fogerty *is* a major artist, and here he seems to be a major artist with little concern for commercial constraints. If his last studio record, "Blue Moon Swamp," found him hewing closely to the Creedence Clearwater Revival blueprint, this new album is messily, gleefully all over the place. There are swamp-rock cuts, of course ("Wicked Old Witch"), retro-rockabilly ("Honey Do"), and country-gospel ballads ("I Will Walk with You"), but there are also two head-turning surprises. "She's Got Baggage" is a prickly artifact located somewhere between the Romantics and the Ramones; "Radar" has a funky organ part, played by Fogerty, that's unlike anything else he's written. And then there's "Nobody's Here Anymore," a somewhat ham-fisted but still-powerful jeremiad against modern technology that features Fogerty duelling with the guest guitarist Mark Knopfler. Oddly sequenced and deeply (maybe purposefully) unsettled, the record has errors, but it also has energy.

—*Ben Greenman*

GEORGE & MARTHA
The performance artist Karen Finley is Martha Stewart and Neal Medlyn is George Bush in a play, written by Finley, that meshes the imagined personalities of the two public figures with the lead characters of Edward Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" A Collective: Unconscious production, at the group's new space, in Tribeca. (279 Church St., at White St. 212-352-3101.)

GUANTÁNAMO: HONOR BOUND TO DEFEND FREEDOM
Victoria Brittain (a former foreign editor of the *Guardian*) and Gillian Slovo (the South African-born novelist) pull together a handful of stories about the men who have been imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay in the wake of 9/11, using interviews with detainees, letters, transcripts of political speeches, and lawyers' briefs. Harsh Nayyar gives a touching performance as the father of a prisoner; Jeffrey Brick plays a man whose sister died in the Twin Towers but who nevertheless wishes he could buy innocent detainees a drink. In one of the spare production's rare light moments, Robert Langdon Lloyd, who first appears onstage as a conscientious British lord, does a turn as an implacable Donald Rumsfeld. Directed by Nicolas Kent and Sacha Wares. (45 Bleecker Theatre, at 45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.)

HEDDA GABLER
The Flemish director Ivo van Hove, of Holland's Toneelgroep Amsterdam, brings his adaptation of Ibsen's play to New York Theatre Workshop. With sets by Jan Versweyveld. (79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200.)

MANFEST
The Obie-winning theatre company New Georges presents a two-week festival of short plays by women, written from the male perspective, which run in rotating repertory. The playwrights include Trista Baldwin, Kirsten Greenidge, Betty Shamieh, Sonya Sobieski, Alice Tuan, and Sheri Wilner. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444. Through Sept. 25.)

MEET THE REAL ERNEST SHACKLETON: A COMEDY ABOUT ANTARCTICA
A musical about the English explorer Ernest Shackleton—who was stranded on the Antarctic ice in his ship, the Endurance, for nearly two years—asks the following question: Did Shackleton make the trip to separate his wife from her suspected lover, a member of his crew? With songs by Terry Radigan and choreography by Ron Schwinn. Written and directed by Michael Christian. (Sande Shurin, 311 W. 43rd St., 6th fl. 212-868-4444. Through Sept. 26.)

NEW YORK MUSICAL THEATRE FESTIVAL
Some of Broadway's biggest talents, old and new (including Raúl Esparza, Kathleen Marshall, Bobby Lopez, Jeff Marx, and Scott Schwartz), are behind this new festival, which aims to do for new musicals what Sundance does for indie films. Three weeks of performances showcase thirty-one new musicals. (212-352-3101. For complete information on venues, performances, and show times, visit www.nymf.org. Through Oct. 3.)

THE OLDEST PROFESSION
The Signature Theatre Company's new season is dedicated to the works of Paula Vogel. It starts off with a comic drama, set during the early days of the Reagan Administration, about five aging bawds who struggle with arthritis and a diminishing clientele. Directed by David Esbjornson. (Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529.)

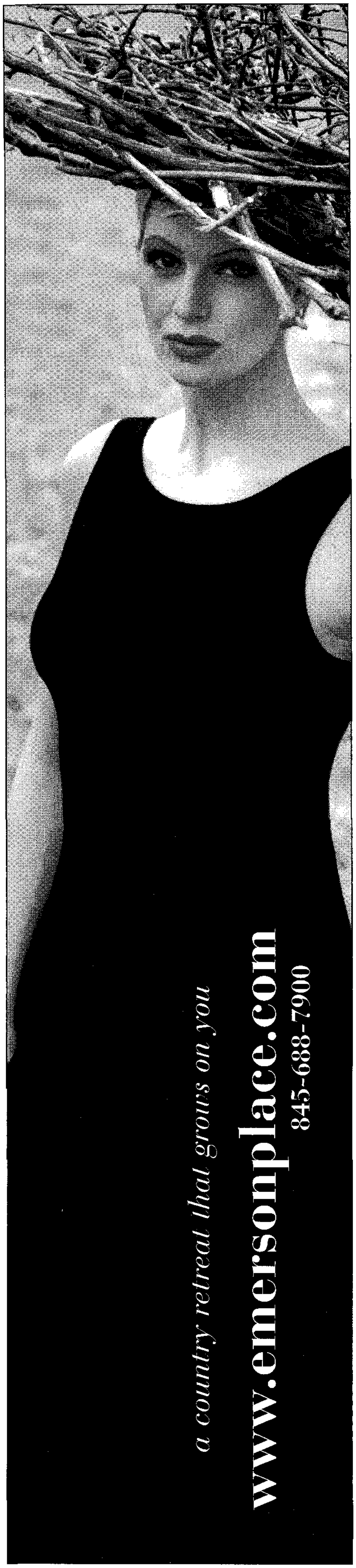
ORPHEUS
In this urban, alt-rock update, Orpheus (Taylor Mac) is a rock star, and Eurydice (Daphne Gaines) is done in by a yellow cab. With text by Stephanie Fleischmann and music by Nikos Brisco. Directed by Kristin Marting. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444. Through Oct. 9.)

PUGILIST SPECIALIST
In a dark contemporary drama by San Francisco's Riot Group, first performed in Britain, four U.S. Marines plot to assassinate a Middle Eastern leader. Written by the group's co-founder, Adriano Shaplin. (59E59 Theatre, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

ROSE RAGE
The Chicago Shakespeare Theatre performs an adaptation by Edward Hall and Roger Warren of Shakespeare's Henry VI trilogy. First developed and performed at England's Watermill Theatre, the production is set in a Victorian slaughterhouse. Throughout the play, a Greek chorus of masked butchers provides a dumb show of the abundant battles and beheadings, hacking at organs and intestines to heighten the visceral impact of the violence. The show is presented as a five-and-a-half-hour event, with an hour-and-fifteen-minute meal break in the middle, for those with sturdy appetites. (Duke on 42nd St. 229 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.)

SLAVA'S SNOWSHOW
In this seriocomic spectacle by the Russian clown Slava Polunin, hobo clowns perform existential antics, culminating in a giant paper snowstorm that blows across the stage and onto the audience. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 212-505-0700.)

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE
Berlioz's music accompanies the movement of inanimate objects through liquid in a thousand-gallon glass tank. Sheets blossom like blown roses; colored scraps of parachute material and spandex dart like pilot fish; tendrils of fringe spill and sway. The action, orchestrated by the master puppeteer Basil Twist, is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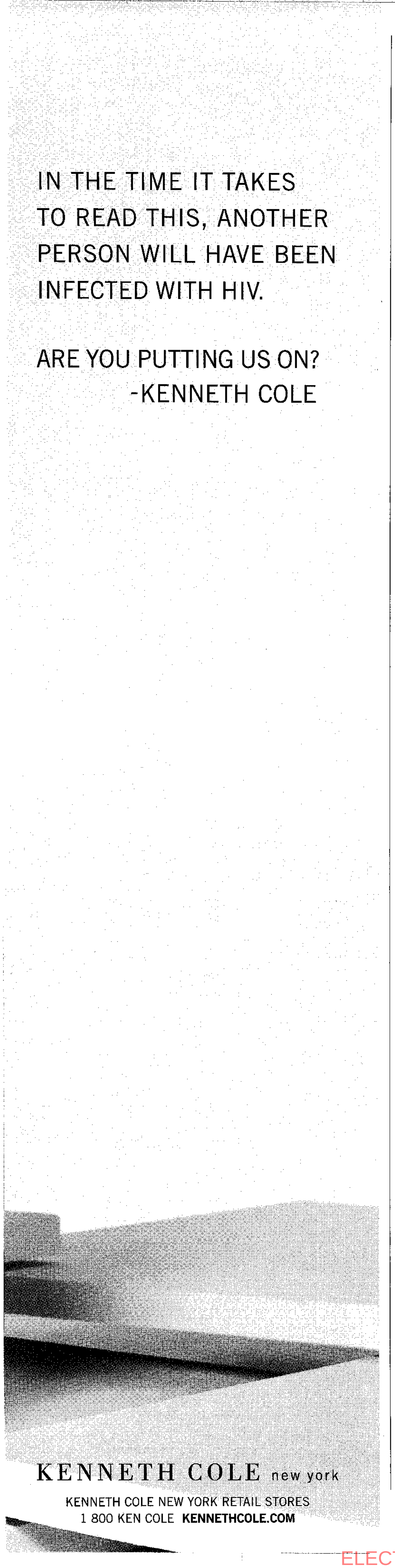
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created by five hardworking puppeteers in wetsuits. (Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.)

ALSO PLAYING

AVENUE Q
Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 212-307-4747.
BLUE MAN GROUP
Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 212-254-4370.
BOMBAY DREAMS
Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 212-239-6200.
CHICAGO
Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.
COOKIN'
Minetta Lane, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 212-420-8000.
DAMES AT SEA
Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 212-279-4200.
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF
Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100.
FORBIDDEN BROADWAY SUMMER SHOCK!
Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.
42ND STREET
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
THE FROGS
Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.
GOLDA'S BALCONY
Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
HAIRSPRAY
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100.
HERE LIES JENNY
Zipper Theatre, 336 W. 37th St. 212-239-6200.
I AM MY OWN WIFE
Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
I LOVE PARIS
Blue Heron Arts Center, 123 E. 24th St. 212-868-4444.
THE LEPERS OF BAILE BAISTE
Phil Bosakowski, 354 W. 45th St. 212-868-4444.
THE LION KING
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
MAMMA MIA!
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544.
MOVIN' OUT
Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100.
ONDINE
Walkerspace, 46 Walker St. 212-868-4444.
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
PICON PIE
DR2, 103 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200.
THE PRODUCERS
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
RENT
Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 212-307-4100.
STOMP
Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 212-477-2477.
TOXIC AUDIO: LOUDMOUTH
Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.
WICKED
Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100.
WONDERFUL TOWN
Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

DANCE

"FALL FOR DANCE"
Six nights of ballet, modern dance, hip-hop, tap, flamenco, African dance, kathak, and trapeze. The programs include much of the best New York has to offer, from canonical works to cutting-edge pieces. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212. For full schedule, visit www.citycenter.org. Sept. 28-Oct. 3 at 8.)

FOREVER TANGO
Luis Bravo's evening of Argentine dance features fourteen dancers and an eleven-piece orchestra. It returns to the Shubert for a two-month stay following a successful run this summer. Opens Sept. 21 at 8. (225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

LIMÓN DANCE COMPANY
The Limón dancers kick off the Joyce's fall season with two rotating programs. "The Unsung," José Limón's all-male tribute to the American Indian, is paired with "Extreme Beauty," a new all-female ensemble piece created by Susanne Linke. The evening concludes with Lar Lubovitch's "Concerto Six Twenty-Two." The other program features two Limón classics—the ensemble piece "Psalm" and the 1942 solo "Chaconne" as well as Jírí Kylián's "Evening Songs," set to Dvořák's choral hymn, in which the dancers create an architecture made of exquisite turns and long running lines. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. Program A: Sept. 21-22 at 8, Sept. 25 at 2, and Sept. 26 at 7:30. Program B: Sept. 23-25 and Sept. 28 at 8 and Sept. 26 at 2. Through Oct. 3.)

"THE HAPPY PRINCE"
Oscar Wilde's fairy tale about a self-sacrificing statue, in a production by the puppeteer Amy Trompetter and the choreographer David Neumann, narrated by Karen Kandel. The choreography has much to do with transformation: hands in white gloves become a bird with flapping wings, and seamstress puppets turn into ships on the Nile. Neumann also plays with scale. In the shadow of an enormous statue, humans enact a scene while, downstage, kneeling puppeteers re-create the action in miniature. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 212-255-5793. Sept. 23-24 at 8 and Sept. 25 at 2 and 8.)

BIG DANCE THEATRE: "PLAN B"
Goldilocks meets "Twin Peaks" in a dance-theatre piece by Annie-B Parson and Paul Lazar set in a surreal woods. A lost waif (Tymberly Canale) finds a bear skin on the forest floor, drapes it around herself, and then exchanges it for a frock coat offered by a puckish woodswoman (Kate Johnson). The two perform a nested dance, legs at forty-five-degree angles, toes pointing, like a two-layered jumping jack. With Lazar and Molly Hickok, who hide out in a transparent cabin, stalking the waif with a brainwashing tape recorder and a toy gun. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Sept. 23-25 at 7:30. Through Oct. 9.)

OCTAVIA CUP DANCE THEATRE
An hour-long dance-theatre piece called "Enredaderas" (Spanish for "entanglements"), choreographed by Laura Ward. In one section, two dancers play dogs attached to their owners by leashes tied at the waist. In later segments, the dancers are entangled in ropes made of nylon stockings. By the evening's end, their bodies are bound together. With music and text performed by the tenor David Gordon and the composer Eli Shapiro. A second, more sombre work, "L'Aigle Noir" ("The Black Eagle"), created a few days after 9/11, shares the bill. (Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, 55 Bethune Street, 11th fl. 212-924-0077. Sept. 23 at 9, Sept. 24 at 9:30, and Sept. 25-26 at 8.)

PETER PUCCI
For the opening night of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Pucci has choreographed Stravinsky's playful twenty-minute cantata "Renard, the Fox," inspired by Russian folktales. Four dancers perform—embodying a fox, a rooster, a cat, and a goat—accompanied by a seventeen-piece orchestra conducted by Ransom Wilson. (See Classical Music.) (Alice Tully Hall. 212-875-5788. Sept. 22 at 7:30.)

"GALAXIE PEARL/THEATRE OF VIEWS"
In his début performance at Danspace Project, the French choreographer Yves Musard interacts with video projections of urban and natural settings in New York, Paris, and Marseilles. He is joined by the guest artists Yvonne Meier, Clarinda MacLow, Jodi Melnick, Dennis O'Connor, Arturo Vidich, and DD Dorvillier. With a video installation by Kim-

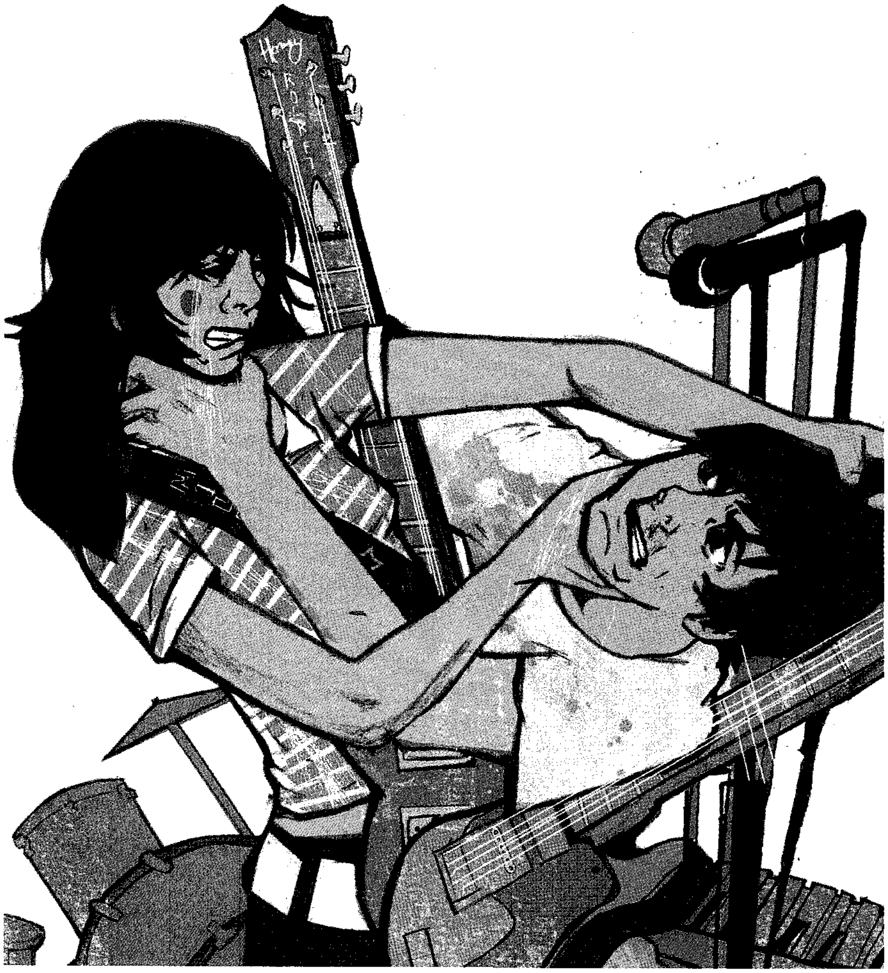
berly Simpson, sound by David Watson, and lighting by Carol Mullins. (St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-8194. Sept. 23-26 at 8:30.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

MARK O'CONNOR'S HOT SWING TRIO
As a session musician, the violinist O'Connor has appeared on nearly five hundred albums, including releases by everyone from James Taylor to Yo-Yo Ma. But his passion is for the hot jazz typified by the music of his mentor, Stéphane Grappelli. O'Connor's trio includes Frank Vignola, a Django Reinhardt-obsessed guitarist, and the bassist John Burr, another Grappelli alumnus. These shows will be recorded for a live album. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Sept. 21-22 at 8.)

BARBARA CARROLL
The decorously swinging pianist and singer basks in the witty lyrics of Dorothy Fields, who wrote gems such as "I Can't Give You Anything but Love," "On the Sunny Side of the Street," and "I'm in the Mood for Love." This performance is the first in a series marking Fields's centennial. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-642-0142. Sept. 22 at 6:30.)

JERRY O'SULLIVAN
A night of Irish music with a master of the Uilleann pipes. (Glucksman Ireland House, New York University, 1 Washington Mews. 212-998-3950. Sept. 24 at 9.)



The brother-and-sister band the Fiery Furnaces, at the Bowery Ballroom.

RACHEL DOMM

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Sept. 25-26: The flamenco guitarist **Ottmar Liebert** and his band Luna Negra. Sept. 28: **DJ Krush,** a native of Japan who's turned his love of hip-hop into a lucrative career.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—Sept. 23: In the late seventies, **Nick Lowe** produced seminal records by the Damned, the Pretenders, Elvis Costello, and other punk and New Wave artists. Lowe's own music has ranged from straight-ahead rock to hook-laden power-pop and country music. He's on a solo acoustic tour, with his longtime collaborator, the keyboardist **Geraint Watkins,** an understated legend in his own right, as his opening act. Sept. 25: The **Fiery Furnaces,** a brother and sister from the Midwest who moved to Brooklyn and recorded an inventive début album last year called "Gallowsbird's Bark." On it, Matthew Friedberger handled most of the kitchen-sink instrumentation, and his sister, Eleanor, sang with a deep, cool voice. Their new album, "Blueberry Boat," is a difficult yet seductive postmodern prog-rock epic. Sept. 27: The young men in the hip local foursome the **Mooney Suzuki** made their name with sweaty garage rock and obvious nods to such old-school proto-punks as the MC5 and the Stooges. They caught the eye of Columbia Records, which paired them with the pop production team the Matrix (known for their work with Avril Lavigne) for their new album, "Alive & Amplified." Sept. 28-30: When the bassist Will Lee,

from "The Late Show with David Letterman," and the guitarist Jimmy Vivino, from "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," take time off from work, they play with the **Fab Faux,** a Beatles tribute band.

FEZ
380 Lafayette St. (212-533-7000)—Sept. 24: The **Trachtenburg Family Slideshow Players** are art-rock refugees from Seattle. The group features a ten-year-old, Rachel, on drums. Her dad, Jason, plays guitar and sings. Tina Piña, her mom, runs the slide projector, which displays vintage images of people on vacation while they pound out "Mountain Trip to Japan, 1959," "Fondue Friends in Switzerland," and other lightly comic songs. Sept. 25: The singer-songwriter **Peter Salett** has a rich voice and a talent for engaging narratives. Later on Sept. 25: Miss Astrid, an eye-patch-wearing, cigarette-smoking lost love child of Marlene Dietrich, presides over the burlesque show the **Va Va Voom Room.** The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

THE HOOK
18 Commerce St., Red Hook, Brooklyn (718-797-3007)—Sept. 24: During the sixties in England, the **Incredible String Band** were avatars of a new folk movement. Long before the notion of world music, they mated Celtic melodies with Middle Eastern and Asian instrumentation and topped them with whimsical lyrics. The frolicking hippies played Woodstock and were loved by everyone from Led Zeppelin to the Beatles. They disbanded in the seventies, but a few years ago they reunited and are now playing the United States for the first time in some thirty years.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—Sept. 23-24: The **Old 97's** came out of Dallas in the early nineties and became one of the harder-edged bands of the alternative-country movement. Their songs, most of which are written by the lead singer Rhett Miller, range from barn-burning country punk to quirky ballads that mix Raymond Carver references with the high lonesome. "Drag It Up," the group's first release in three years, finds the band in fine form. Sept. 25: The Celtic rock of the **Saw Doctors.** Sept. 27: The garage rock of Detroit's **Von Bondies. Auf Der Maur,** the group led by the veteran bassist Melissa Auf Der Maur is the opening act.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Sept. 22: **Darlene Love,** whose voice was one of the opening salvos of rock and roll. (Her hits include "He's a Rebel" and "He's Sure the Boy I Love," produced by Phil Spector.) Later on Sept. 22: The rapper **Talib Kweli** lays down some tracks from his new album "The Beautiful Struggle." With the atmospheric down-tempo sounds of **Mudville.** Sept. 25: The **Incredible String Band** (see the Hook).

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (212-219-3055)—In 1981, the concert film "Urgh! A Music War" introduced brave new music that, at the time, mainstream radio ignored. The film featured bands that became well known (XTC, Devo, Dead Kennedys, the Police) as well as a few acts that remained obscure (Klaus Nomi, Toyah Willcox, and the Surf Punks). On Sept. 24-25, *The Onion* pays tribute with "Urgh! The War to End All Wars," a show in which **Pilot to Gunner,** the **Figgs, Dalek,** and other contemporary bands will explore the film's legacy.

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—Sept. 25: The crazed Texan **Gibby Haynes,** on leave from his day job fronting the Butthole Surfers, stops by with songs from his début solo album, "Gibby Haynes and His Problem." Sept. 28: **Alan Sparhawk,** of the ghostly Duluth trio Low.

SATALLA
37 W. 26th St. (212-576-1155)—Sept. 26: As a teen-ager, the Louisiana native **Curley Taylor** played drums in his father's blues, soul, and zydeco band. He went on to hold down the beat for Steve Riley, Geno Delafose, C. J. Chenier, and other Louisiana legends. He now plays the accordion and has his own band, Zydeco Trouble.

SPIRIT
530 W. 27th St. (212-268-9477)—Sept. 22: **Toots & the Maytals,** whose 1968 hit, "Do the Reggay," gave ska, dub, rock steady, and every other substratum of Jamaican music one all-encompassing name.

TONIC
107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503)—Sept. 23: The versatile downtown guitarist **Marc Ribot.** Sept. 26: A night of new music with **Slow Six,** an eight-member collective that runs its string instruments through a laptop; the vocal improviser **Shelley Hirsch** and the cellist **Okkyung Lee;** and the **Last Town Chorus,** a Brooklyn-based duo made up of the lap-steel player and singer Megan Hickey and the guitarist Nat Guy.

WEBSTER HALL
125 E. 11th St. (212-353-1600)—Sept. 22: The **Tragically Hip.** The Canadian rock quintet, an arena-size phenomenon at home, continues its quest for worldwide success. Their countryman **Sam Roberts,** a major pop star in the making, opens the proceedings. Sept. 27: Sea chanteys, Celtic folktales, and the songwriter Colin Meloy's eccentric stories are given lush treatment by his band, the **Decemberists.** With **Lou Barlow,** of Sebadoh.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL
59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800)—Through Oct. 2: The vocalist **Stacey Kent** offers a program of songs by the likes of Cole Porter, George Gershwin, and Lerner and Loewe.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—The guitarist **John Scofield** (here with his trio through Sept. 26) favors tricky, asymmetrical lines. Where his peers tend to be marathon runners, he's an ambler. The key to his appeal is simple: within this cultivated improviser beats the heart of a twisted bluesman; Scofield flaunts the funk, grabs the groove, and generally proves that, for a father figure to a younger generation, he's still got plenty of juice.

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through Oct. 9, **Dixie Carter,** formerly of the television show "Designing Women." Cabaret is where her heart is, and she expresses her love with a wide-ranging repertoire and good humor.

CHARLIE O'S TIMES SQUARE
1611 Broadway, at 49th St. (212-246-1960)—Mondays and Tuesdays: **Vince Giordano and his Nighthawks Orchestra.** Manning the most unwieldy of instruments (bass, tuba, bass saxophone) as well as a bulbous vintage Kellogg microphone, Giordano leads a tuxedo-clad eleven-piece band whose ease with early jazz and swing breathes life into an overlooked era.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through Sept. 26: The horn players **James Moody, James Carter,** and **Vincent Herring** celebrate the birthday of the late saxophonist Cannonball Adderley. The rhythm section includes **Michael Wolff, Walter Booker,** and **Roy McCurdy.** Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

LE JAZZ AU BAR
41 E. 58th St. (212-308-9455)—Through Sept. 25: Eight years ago **Madeleine Peyroux** released her first album, "Dreamland," a blend of Billie Holiday-esque sass and country-and-Western spunk. "Careless Love," the long-awaited follow-up album, has just come out, with a combination of offbeat standards, Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen covers, and originals.

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (212-242-1063)—Sept. 24-25: The drummer **Jeff (Tain) Watts** remembers the birthday of his former bandmate, the pianist Kenny Kirkland, who died in 1998. Among Watts's guests are the pianist **Stephen Scott** and the saxophonist **Marcus Strickland.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Sept. 23-26: The **Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra.** Her new album, "Concert in the Garden," which is available only through her Web site, is a fine example of Schneider's talents as a composer, arranger,

TABLES FOR TWO

BARBÈS

21 E. 36th St. (212-684-0215)—Who are the squat old men with the hoary mustaches sitting all night drinking mint tea underneath the delicate fingers of a potted palm? Count them among the enduring mysteries of the French-Moroccan restaurant that opened some six months ago in the shadow of the Empire State Building, on an old-fashioned block between Macy's and the Morgan Library. More easily answered is the question of the stern lady looking down from a black-and-white portrait near the bar: it's Um Kulthum, one of the most beloved singers in the Arab world and recipient of the biggest funeral in Egypt after Nasser.

"She was more powerful than the prince," an ebullient waitress said on a recent night. "She recorded more than a hundred albums."

"Dead in 1975," her more sombre male counterpart said.

For dinner, they recommended a classic chicken tagine. (The French food on the menu—endive and Roquefort, steak au poivre—can be had anywhere.) When it arrived, in a gnome's cap of terra-cotta, the lid was removed, and a lemony fog drifted over the table. The mildness of the meat was complicated by the sharp, salty taste of green olives. But first came an appetizer of four tightly wrapped triangles of pastry filled with a chicken-and-almond mixture and fairy-dusted with confectioner's sugar and cinnamon; tangy, well-seasoned lamb shish kabob; and a plate of *zaâlouk*—a smoked-eggplant mash, similar to ratatouille—and light, whipped hummus. Disappointingly, there was nothing Moroccan offered for dessert; what they had was crème brûlée, apple pie, and sorbet. *Pistilla,* a typical dessert, was "too much trouble," one waiter said, although a chicken *pistilla* can be had as a main course.

Hours passed. The talk at the nearby tables turned eternal: marriages and births. The waitress left with a bouncy farewell. The last drops from the embossed silver pitcher of mint tea—with fresh mint leaves, Chinese green tea, and orange-blossom water—were poured into a small gilded glass. On the way out, a chummy fellow at the door said, "Au revoir." (Open daily from 11 A.M. to midnight. Entrées $16.75-$26.75.)

—*Dana Goodyear*

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and bandleader. She creates atmospheric soundscapes that make room for impressive soloists.

JOE'S PUB

425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Sept. 23: **Willem Breuker Kollektief** traffics in disciplined anarchy. The virtuosic, irreverent Dutchmen marry classical precision with free-jazz ideas.

VILLAGE VANGUARD

178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Through Sept. 26: The **Bad Plus.** The pianist Ethan Iverson, the bassist Reid Anderson, and the gracefully pile-driving drummer Dave King cover Blondie and Nirvana tunes alongside brainy originals and occasional pieces of sonic surrealism. They have more than enough musicianship to back up their tradition-bucking swagger. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—When Rodin was commissioned to sculpt Balzac, the writer had been dead for forty-one years, and Rodin hired an unknown man from Tours, Balzac's birthplace, as a model. The subsequent jowly terra-cotta head is included in **"Artists' Artists,"** a gathering of portraits of and by artists. Picabia depicts Stieglitz as a stylized camera, and Jacques Villon imagines his brother Marcel Duchamp as a kind of " 'Nude Descending the Staircase' While Reading a Book." Larry Rivers, meanwhile, pictures John Ashbery as a homunculus floating in a cloud of words, the poet's own "Oleum Misericordiae." Through Nov. 7. ♦ **"All That Glitters Is Not Gold: The Art, Form, and Function of Gilt Bronze in the French Interior."** Through Feb. 20. ♦ **"Art Deco Paris."** Through Feb. 27. ♦ **"German Drawings and Prints from the Weimar Republic (1919-33)."** Through Oct. 17. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)

33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—This is MOMA's last week in its temporary Queens home. The museum closes Sept. 27 in preparation for the move back to Manhattan, where its renovated and expanded building will open on Nov. 20. ♦ A sculptor who went AWOL from the gallery scene more than thirty years ago makes her triumphant return in **"Lee Bontecou: A Retrospective."** ♦ **"Tall Buildings"** documents twenty-five recent skyscraper designs with photographs, models, diagrams, and blueprints. ♦ A two-part installation, **"Cut Outs"** and **"Suspended Seams,"** was made by Jean Shin from the MOMA staff's cast-off clothing. ♦ **"Humble Masterpieces,"** a collection of a hundred and twenty-two objects either drawn from the museum's collection (such as a Post-it note) or under consideration for acquisition (such as M&M's). ♦ Selections from the permanent collection are on display. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

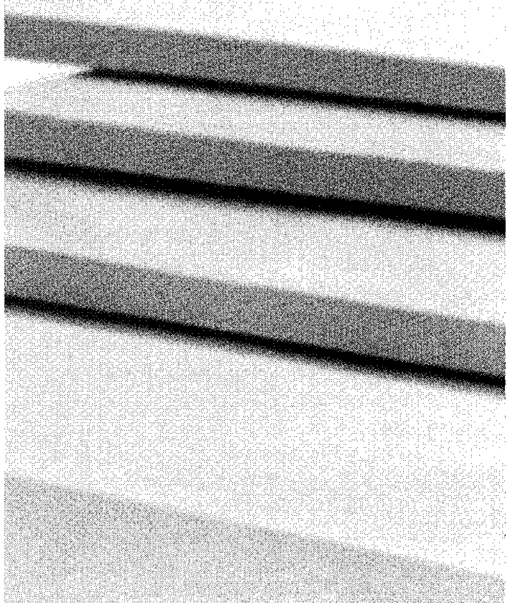
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—The Guggenheim has the largest collection of work by Vasily Kandinsky in the United States, and its curators have decided to devote one gallery to his work permanently. **"Kandinsky Gallery: An Inaugural Selection"** kicks things off. Through May 11, 2005. ♦ Selections from the permanent collection are on display. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—The small, acute show **"Memorials of War"** achieves what a gallery scene dense with antiwar protests can't: a precise, moving group of pieces edited by curators with historical perspective. Vik Muniz's "memory rendering" of the famous photograph of a Vietnamese girl fleeing a napalm attack is juxtaposed with Jon Haddock's version of the same scene, from which the children have been erased. Several pieces address the weaknesses and limitations of conventional memorials. Robert Morris's "War Memorial" lithographs (1970) sketch out impossible plans, like a cross-shaped "Trench with Chlorine Gas," or a "1/2 Mile Concrete Star with Names." Edward Kienholz's "Non-War Memorial," from the same year, calls for making fifty thousand mannequins from surplus Army uniforms stuffed with clay and laying them out in a field. On a smaller scale, Chris Burden's painted tin figures depict "America's Darker Moments": scenes from My Lai, Kent State, Hiroshima, Dallas, and Money, Mississippi, the town where Emmett Till was killed. Through Nov. 28. ♦ **"Cotton Puffs, Q-Tips, Smoke and Mirrors: The Drawings of Ed Ruscha"** and **"Ed Ruscha and Photography."** Through Sept. 26. ♦ **"Evidence of Impact: Art and Photography 1963-1978."** Through Oct. 10. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

CHELSEA ART MUSEUM

556 W. 22nd St. (212-255-0719)—The retrospective exhibition **"Agnes Denes: Projects for Public Spaces."** In 1982, Denes planted a two-acre wheat field on a landfill two blocks from Wall Street; in 1998, she unleashed a flock of sheep to graze on the grounds of the American Academy in Rome. A manmade mountain on reclaimed land in Finland, planted with eleven thousand trees, was conceived as a "living time capsule." The photographs, drawings, and diagrams are interesting, even though many of the projects, like her proposal for the Irish Hunger Memorial, in Battery Park, which was awarded to Brian Tolle, exist only in documentary form.



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Through Nov. 6. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (212-849-8300)—**"Design ≠ Art: Functional Objects from Donald Judd to Rachel Whiteread."** Through Feb. 27, 2005. ♦ **"Faster, Cheaper, Newer, More: Revolutions of 1848."** Through Jan. 9, 2005. ♦ **"FutureShack,"** an industrial shipping container conceived by the Australian architect Sean Godsell as refugee-camp housing. Through Oct. 10. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 9; Saturdays, 10 to 6; and Sundays, noon to 6.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (212-423-3200)—**"Urban Eden,"** three visions of New York. Neil Goldberg's two-and-a-half-minute "Hallelujah Anyway" is a quick-cut video of merchants opening the metal gates to their shops in the East Village, a former immigrant Jewish enclave. Shalom Gorewitz's "Levinas in Yorkville" combines strobelike images of Yorkville by night with fragments of text by the twentieth-century philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. The longest (and best) is Jem Cohen's "Lost Book Found," a thirty-seven-minute meditation on messages posted throughout the city, from graffiti to rambling broadsides taped up outside the central post office, on Eighth Avenue. Through Oct. 31. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays, 11 to 8; and Fridays, 11 to 3.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM
144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500)—**"Figuratively,"** a showcase of work by Dave McKenzie, William Villalongo, and Wangechi Mutu, the museum's three artists-in-residence for 2003-04. Through Sept. 25. ♦ **"Seeds and Roots: Selections from the Permanent Collection."** Through Sept. 25. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES–UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

GEORG BASELITZ
Paintings from 1969-71, all inverted portraits and landscapes that were part of Baselitz's effort to change the way viewers considered form and perspective. Through Oct. 30. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. 212-744-2313.)

ALLAN MC COLLUM
McCollum has been making sculptures he calls "Perfect Vehicles," vessel-shaped objects modelled on traditional Chinese ginger jars, since 1985. The Public Art Fund has installed a group of them in Central Park, a trio in black, red, and gold glass-fibre-reinforced concrete. They have bevelled edges, tapered lids, and gracefully swelling sides, and suggest cornucopian bounty or Pandoric horror—or, for the fanciful folks who wrote the copy on the explanatory plaque, "cartoon abstractions of an English bobby." Through Feb. 2005. (Doris C. Freedman Plaza, 60th St. at Fifth Ave. For more information, call 212-980-4575.)

DANIEL JOSEPH MARTINEZ
"The House America Built" is based on the Montana cabin of the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, and is coated with Martha Stewart Signature Paint—in hues like Cosmos Lemon and Faded Brick. The cabin is split down the middle so visitors can peer inside, but there's nothing to see but the plywood interior. The silk-screened posters in the back room are less subtle. They lash out at American culture with bumper-sticker rage: "Oblivion Is Our Ruling Passion," "Sometimes I Can't Breathe," and "This Funeral Is for the Wrong Corpse." Through Oct. 2. (The Project, 37 W. 57th St. 212-688-4673.)

PAM SHEEHAN
Plein-air paintings, mostly majestic shorelines observed from places such as Nyack, San Francisco, and Long Beach, made on canvases not much bigger than CD cases. The brushwork is confident, with foreground and skies laid down in quick horizontal strokes, landmasses and trees painted in contrasting tumultuous verticals. The best works contain surprising glints of color—tangerines, umbers, viridian—that convey fleeting light. Through Oct. 2. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. 212-838-0333.)

SCOTT TEPLIN
Teplin imagines floor plans, complete with walls and furnishings, as seen from above: the vantage point is that of a kid checking on a hamster cage. In one work, a vast warren of rooms fits inside a roofless Chevy van. The terrain, though, is clearly psychological and highly vulnerable: unmade beds recur, as do hot tubs, public pools, crematory-style chimneys, and subway stairs that lead to spaces beneath the walled-in homescapes. Through Oct. 16. (Baumgold, 74 E. 79th St. 212-861-7338.)

"THREE CLASSICS"
The Knoedler gallery was renovated recently so that it could show off big-shouldered contemporary works like the ones in this show: three mammoth canvases, one each from Robert Motherwell ("Elegy to the Spanish Republic"), Frank Stella ("Le Rêve de d'Alembert"), and Helen Frankenthaler ("Hint from Bassano"). All were made in the early seventies, when sizable and, to current sensibilities, often self-important statement paintings were in vogue. Each one is stunning, but they are hung so closely together that their *grandes gestes* cancel each other out. Stella's has the most zing. Frankenthaler's is the one you leave thinking about. Through Oct. 30. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 212-794-0550.)

GALLERIES–CHELSEA

AMIE DICKE
In "New Season, New Girls, New Looks," Dicke pursues the urge to shred perfection, taking scissors to blown-up images from fashion magazines and turning them into spidery lace. By the time she's worked them over with ink, the models' veins seem to be traced in black. The photographic skeletons look snappy on the wall, but it's hard to imagine what more Dicke can get out of the goth-fragility aesthetic. Through Oct. 2. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-352-9460.)

ROBIN RHODE
Photographs and videos by the young South African artist. Through Oct. 30. (Rubenstein, 527 W. 23rd St. 212-627-8000.)

PIPILOTTI RIST
Two new video installations by the Swiss artist. Through Oct. 23. (Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 212-206-9100.)

DANA SCHULTZ / AMY SILLMAN / KARA WALKER
Walker's series of small-scale paper dolls, the herky-jerky grace of their limbs articulated by black painted brads, complements the fluid slapdash of Sillman's blocky agglomerations in petal pinks and lemon yellows. Faces and figures float through Sillman's pictures that speak in turn to images in Schultz's watercolors, whose cheerful-angsty themes are not unlike Walker's viciously merry vision of the Old South. Through Oct. 2. (Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. 212-929-2262.)

JANE AND LOUISE WILSON
A five-screen video installation of women exercising is based on photographs taken in New Zealand in 1910. The work addresses the history of eugenics policies in that country after the First World War. Through Nov. 6. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-255-1121.)

Short List

STEPHEN ANDREWS / JERRY MORIARTY
CUE Art Foundation, 511 W. 25th St.
212-206-3583. Through Oct. 16.

GEORG BASELITZ
Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St.
212-741-1111. Through Oct. 30.

ALLAN MC COLLUM
Petzel, 535 W. 22nd St.
212-680-9467. Through Oct. 2.

ALEJANDRO MAZÓN
Billis, 511 W. 25th St.
212-645-2621. Through Oct. 2.

SIMONE SHUBUCK / PHOEBE WASHBURN
LFL, 530 W. 24th St.
212-989-7700. Through Oct. 2.

WALTER THOMPSON
Amos Eno, 530 W. 25th St.
212-226-5342. Through Sept. 25.

GALLERIES–DOWNTOWN

"FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION NATIONAL MONUMENT"
The giant bright-red megaphone designed by Laurie Hawkinson, John Malpede, and Erika Rothenberg—first shown in Battery Park City as part of the "Art on the Beach" program in 1984—has been installed in Foley Square for election season. It looks like Soviet agitprop, but its spirit is pure First Amendment: visitors are invited to climb up six feet to the speaker's platform and declaim whatever they wish. This can be a deflating experience, however, since the megaphone does little to amplify speakers' voices. Through Nov. 13. (Foley Sq., at the intersection of Pearl and Centre Sts.)

Short List

BYRON DOBELL
Atlantic, 40 Wooster St.
212-219-3183. Through Oct. 2.
ROBERT RYMAN
Peter Blum, 99 Wooster St.
212-343-0441. Through Sept. 25.

PHOTOGRAPHY

MICHELLE ELZAY
Fifty-one color portraits of Benedictine nuns from the Abbaye Saint Marie de Maumont, in Bordeaux, are tucked into a glassed-in gallery off a busy corridor at Fordham's campus at Lincoln Center. The fourteen-by-fourteen-inch prints are closely hung in two rows, which emphasizes the monotony of the nuns' identical gray head scarves, white collars, and black dresses. But Sister Marie-Madeleine wears a huge smile, Sister Marie-Pierre seems awfully suspicious, and the ancient, smiling Sister Scholastique has a supermodel's cheekbones. Elzay's straightforward technique recalls August Sander and the Bechers. Through Sept. 30. (Center Gallery, Fordham University at Lincoln Center, 113 W. 60th St. 212-636-6303.)

TODD HIDO
Moody color prints of desolate American landscapes, taken with long exposure times from behind the windshield of a car. Many of the photographs were made just after a rainstorm, when the windshield was still wet or streaked, which gives them a blurred or, in one case, a "distressed" look, almost as if the Starn twins had been working on it. Telephone poles lean precariously over muddy fields, snow-covered roads twist off to the edge of the frame, and leafless trees stand alone in the mist. The prints range in size from eleven by fourteen to thirty-eight by forty-eight inches, and are austerely beautiful. Through Oct. 16. (Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-627-2410.)

ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI
Sanguinetti, who is having her first solo show in the United States, photographed two young Argentine girls, cousins, over the course of five years. "The Adventures of Guille and Belinda and the Enigmatic Meaning of Their Dreams" includes portraits of them simply as girls—standing outside with their family, looking in a hand mirror—but the more interesting photographs have theatrical elements or are staged. In "Ophelias," they float downstream on their backs with their eyes closed, holding flowers. Belinda, the thin one, wears a blue frock, and Guille, who is heavyset, is draped in a piece of colorful fabric that trails out past her feet. They set up mock religious tableaux ("Madonna and Child"), wear fake mustaches, and tape flower petals to their fingernails. And they grow up. In the later photographs, Belinda has developed breasts. The prints are thirty inches square, in luminous color, and splendidly executed. Through Oct. 23. (Milo, 552 W. 24th St. 212-414-0370.)

"PHOTOGRAPHS BY IRAQI CIVILIANS"
A few months ago, the Daylight Community Arts Foundation gave ten Iraqi citizens disposable cameras and asked them to photograph whatever they liked. The resulting images, now on display at N.Y.U., include pictures of gravediggers carrying their shovels to a burial site in Falluja, a young Iraqi boy with a spinal deformity being tended to by his mother, and a group of men talking and smoking in a barbershop in Baghdad. Most of the pictures have a single, often heart-wrenching subject and are simply composed. In the case of an image of a Japanese photographer posing an Iraqi man against the wall of a mosque in Baghdad—the sheikh who negotiated the release of three Japanese journalists taken hostage in Falluja, it turns out—the results are sublime. Through Oct. 10. (Tisch School of the Arts, 721 Broadway. 212-998-1930.)

Short List

JUSTINE KURLAND
Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St.
212-352-8372. Through Oct. 9.
GILLIAN LAUB
Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 212-517-3766.
Through Oct. 9.
ELLEN PHELAN
Laurence Miller, 20 W. 57th St. 212-397-3930.
Through Oct. 29.
SHOMEI TOMATSU
Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 212-832-1155.
Opens Sept. 22.
ALEX WEBB
Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 212-627-4819.
Through Oct. 30.
GARRY WINOGRAND
Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.
Through Oct. 16.

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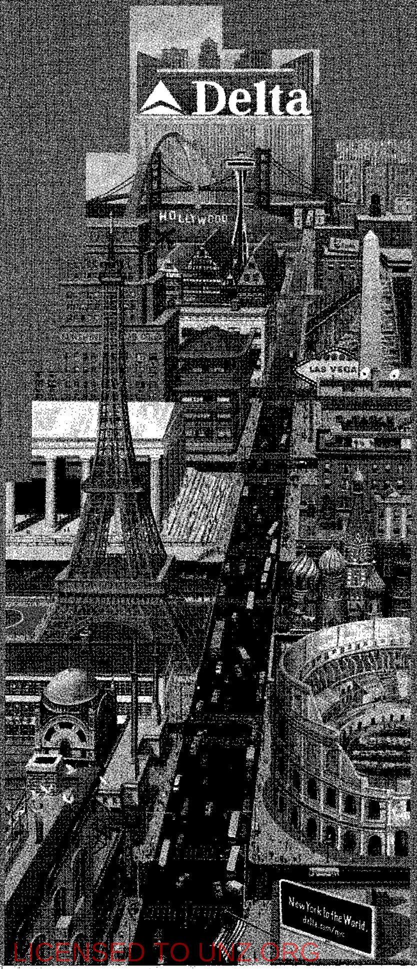

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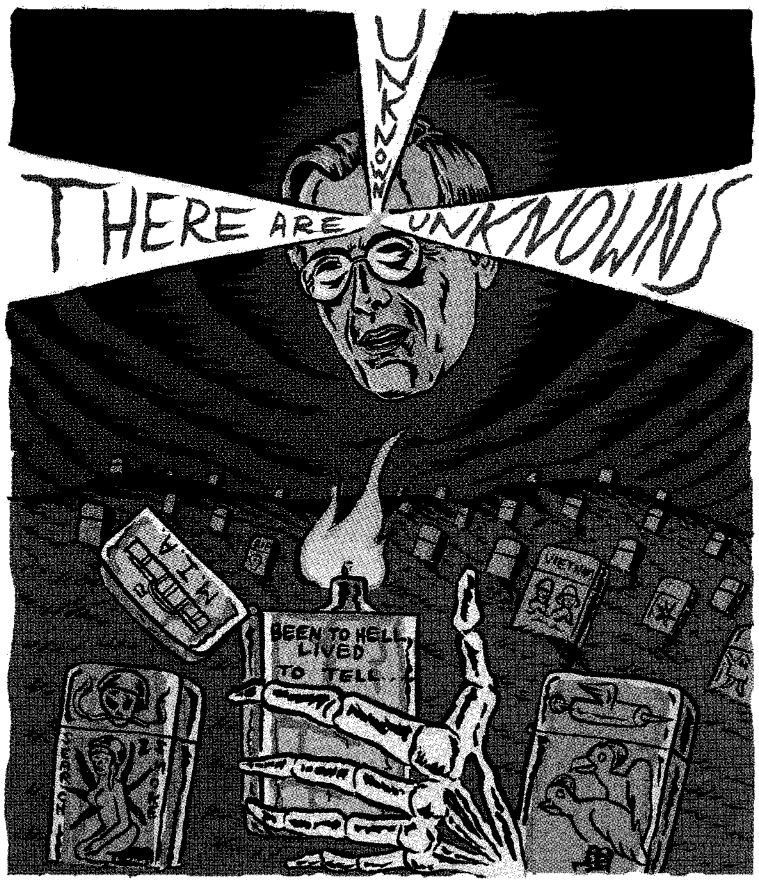
AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S

Sept. 22 at 10:15 A.M.: The Buddha, who understood the fleeting nature of all things, would no doubt pass up this chance to amass hoary sculptures of himself. But for the less enlightened, this sumptuous sale of statues and related arts is sure to be an easy, illusory pleasure. One rare item, a sixth-century sandstone carving from northern China, depicts a bodhisattva standing in blissful equipoise; in a fourteenth-century mandala tapestry, from China or Central Asia, the cosmos orbits two wildly copulating deities. ♦ Sept. 22 at 11:45 A.M. and Sept. 23 at 10:15 A.M.: The soft chatter of gossip seems to envelop four ceramic Tang-dynasty “figures of fat ladies”—the house’s term for one of this sale’s marquee lots. The statuettes, roughly seventeen inches tall, epitomize the era’s subtle craftsmanship. They will be auctioned among a wide variety of Chinese arts and artifacts, including porcelain dishes, clothing, and bronzes. ♦ Sept. 24 at 10:15 A.M.: This unusual sale showcases modern Indian painting alongside ancient sacred artifacts from the subcontinent and Southeast Asia. In “Musician,” a quasi-Cubist oil from 1963 by the Sri Lankan painter George Keyt, human figures are abstracted to reveal deeper meanings; a nineteenth-century watercolor attributed to Purkhu of Kangra depicts gods battling above the clouds. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.)

CHRISTIE'S

Sept. 22 at 10 A.M., 2, and 4:30: Japanese and Korean art, including scrolls, ceramics, screens, and a collection of Noh masks and robes. The painted scroll “Standing Courtesan,” by Hokusai, bears the signature of both the artist and the collector, the *homme de lettres* Edmond de Goncourt. ♦ Sept. 23 at 10 A.M. and 2: Christie’s wraps up its Asia Week sales with an auction of Indian and Southeast Asian art, including several pieces from the collection of Nathan L. Halpern. Two items stand in stark contrast: a voluptuous Indian sandstone figure of a celestial female from the tenth or eleventh century and an eleventh-century Khmer sandstone figure of Uma, the consort of the Hindu god Shiva. One is erotically charged and highly decorated, the other enigmatic, regal, and stylized. In the afternoon, an array of paintings by twentieth-century Indian artists, including Maqbool Fida Husain, Tyeb Mehta, and Syed Haider Raza. ♦ Sept. 27 at 2: A hundred and eighty lots of American paintings, drawings, and sculptures. ♦ Sept. 28 at 10 A.M. and 3: Original limited-edition prints and multiples by iconic artists (including ceramics by Picasso and even a tapestry, by Alexander Smith, after Matisse) are offered up in two groups: in the morning, postwar and more recent items by Pop and contemporary stars including Warhol, Lichtenstein, and Hirst; in the afternoon, works by such beloved moderns as Chagall, Miró, and Toulouse-Lautrec. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)



Phil Kline’s “Zippo Songs” and “Rumsfeld Songs,” at Merkin Concert Hall.

DAVID SANDLIN

SWANN

Sept. 23 at 10:30 A.M.: Early printed books from the estate of Leonard Hansen, including a broad selection of Bibles along with books on church history, theology, law, and other subjects. (104 E. 25th St. 212-254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA

Sept. 22 at 8 and Sept. 25 at 1: Giancarlo del Monaco’s production of **“Madama Butterfly”** returns, with Kallen Esperian, Maria Zifchak, Roberto Aronica, and Vassily Gerello in the leading roles; Emmanuel Villaume, an elegant interpreter of Mediterranean repertory, conducts. ♦ Sept. 23 at 7:30: Ben Heppner sings the title role of **“Otello.”** Barbara Frittoli is his Desdemona, with Carlo Guelfi singing Iago; James Levine. ♦ Sept. 24 at 8: Levine comes back to conduct **“Carmen,”** with the magnificent Olga Borodina in the leading role, Richard Leech singing Don José, Hei-Kyung Hong as Micaëla, and Ildar Abdrazakov as Escamillo. Go for the singing, not for

Franco Zeffirelli's enervated production. ♦ Sept. 28 at 8: With Neil Shicoff replacing Leech. ♦ Sept. 25 at 6:30: **"Die Walküre,"** part of the Met's sold-out "Ring" cycle of the spring, comes back as a solo offering with a new conductor, Valery Gergiev, and a significantly Slavic cast that includes Olga Sergeeva (in her début, as Brünnhilde), Margaret Jane Wray, Yvonne Naef, Plácido Domingo, Vladimir Vaneev, and Stephen Milling. (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA
Sept. 23 at 7:30 and Sept. 25 at 1:30: **"La Rondine,"** Puccini's sole operetta, pours the hooker-with-a-heart-of-gold scenario at the core of "La Traviata" through the comedic sieve of "Der Rosenkavalier"; no one dies this time around, but the tears still flow. (The supple tunes include the beloved "Chi il bel sogno di Doretta.") With Pamela Armstrong, Angela Turner Wilson, Gerard Powers, and Tracey Welborn, in Lotfi Mansouri's Second Empire production; Stephen Lord conducts. ♦ Sept. 24 at 8: **"La Traviata,"** with Maria Kanyova, Robert Breault, and Michael Corvino in the leading roles; George Manahan. ♦ Sept. 25 at 8: You have to wonder why it's taken so long for Strauss's **"Daphne"**—a rapturously beautiful "bucolic tragedy" written under the shadow of Nazism—to get a New York production. But it's here at last, and Paul Kellogg's intrepid company deserves praise for having the courage to mount a work that tests its limits. Elizabeth Futral, offering a radiant account of the high-flying title role, is the best thing about the evening. Stephen Lawless's staging flirts with Brown Shirt costumes and Leni Riefenstahl-like imagery but is relatively constrained. Also with Ursula Ferri (a noble Gaea, who effectively manages the part's baritonal low notes), Roger Honeywell, and Robert Chafin; the City Opera Orchestra, conducted by George Manahan, does itself proud. ♦ Sept. 26 at 1:30: **"La Bohème,"** with Angela Marambio, Julianne Borg, Jorge Antonio Pita, and Grant Youngblood; Steven White. ♦ Sept. 28 at 7:30: Mark Morris's witty production of Rameau's opera-ballet **"Platée,"** with costumes by Isaac Mizrahi, returns with a splendid cast that includes Christine Brandes, Lisa Saffer, the stylish diminutive French tenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt (in the *travesti* title role of a spectacularly ugly frog princess), and, of course, the Mark Morris Dance Group; Daniel Beckwith. (New York State Theatre. 212-870-5570.)

"HELL"
A chamber opera (with music by Michael Webster and a libretto by Eileen Myles) loosely based on Dante's "Inferno" receives a pair of workshop performances before a West Coast tour. Juliana Snapper, James Rio, and Scott Graff sing it, backed up by a ten-piece orchestra. (St. Mark's-In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. Sept. 22 and Sept. 29 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

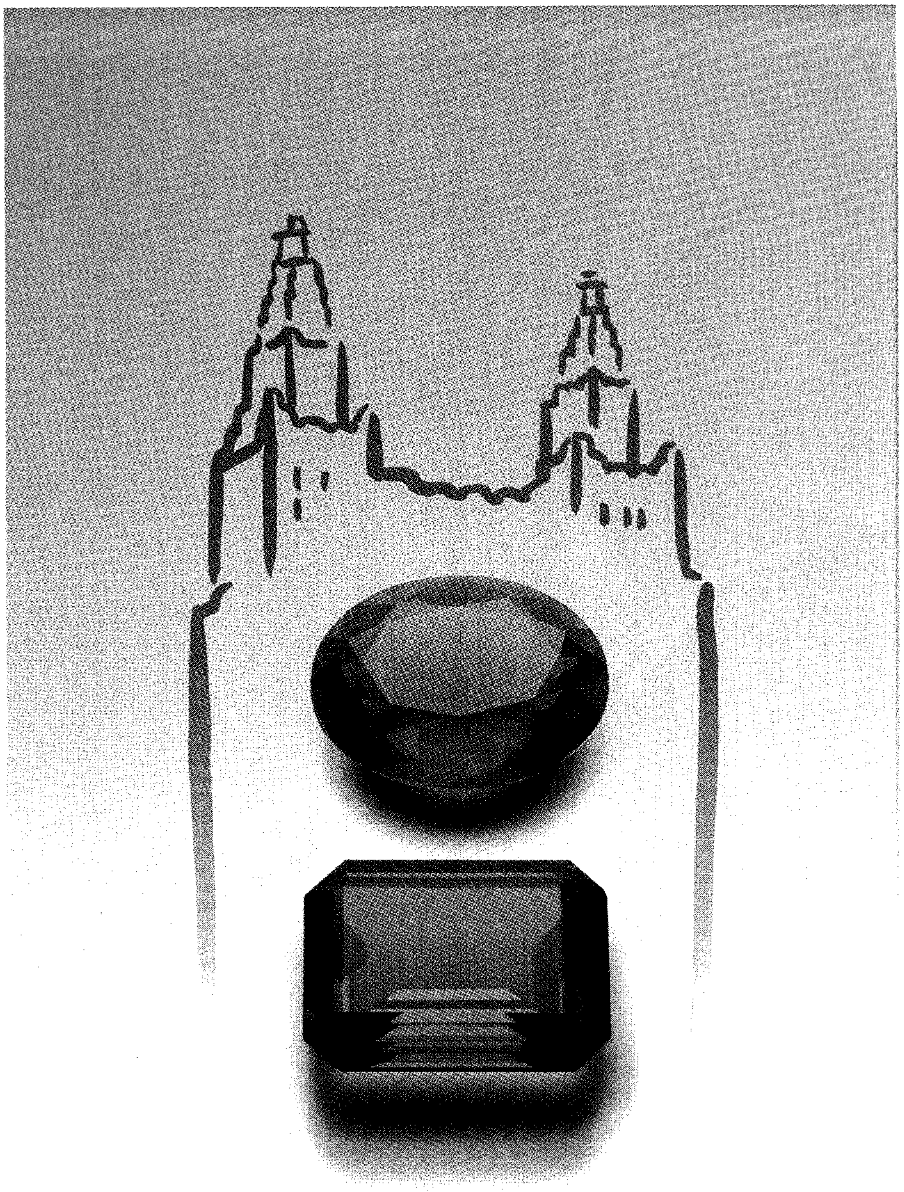
AMATO OPERA
An English-language version of **"The Magic Flute,"** directed and conducted, as always, by Anthony Amato. (319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 212-228-8200. Sept. 25 at 7:30 and Sept. 26 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC
Lorin Maazel, having opened his season with a conservative Beethoven-Dvořák concert, begins the subscription series with a program that gives a hint of his moderately progressive instincts: Messiaen's reverent "Les Offrandes Oubliées," coupled with Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto (with the magnetic Maxim Vengerov as soloist) and Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656. Sept. 22-23 at 7:30 and Sept. 24 at 11 A.M.)

RECITALS

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
The Society, under the new management of the Emerson String Quartet cellist David Finckel and his wife, the pianist Wu Han, begins its season



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"Former Shingeki Actress Utae Muromachi, 1967," by Shomei Tomatsu, at the Japan Society (see Photography).

auspiciously with a program that stretches the definition of chamber music to its limits. In addition to Ravel's "Introduction and Allegro," a chamber version of Berlioz's "Nuits d'Été" (with the mezzo-soprano Jennifer Larmore), and Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll," there will be a performance of Stravinsky's "Renard, the Fox" a "burlesque" (with choreography by Peter Pucci) that features the singers John Aler, Kevin Burdette, Daniel Gross, and Steven Paul Spears, the flutist Tara Helen O'Connor, and a host of C.M.S. regulars. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-875-5788. Sept. 22 at 7:30. See Dance.)

WET INK ENSEMBLE
The group, a collection of soloists who enjoy the challenges of virtuosic new music, teams up with the avant-rock band Zs to perform music by a clutch of modernist masters (including Rzewski, Wolff, and Earle Brown) along with more recent works by Alex Mincek and Matthew Hough. (Bowery Poetry Club, 308 Bowery. Sept. 22 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

BARGEMUSIC
Sept. 23-24 at 7:30: Handel's Suite No. 5 is a courtly prelude to the pianist Sergey Shepkin's Romantic program of Schumann ("Kreisleriana") and Mussorgsky ("Pictures at an Exhibition"). ♦ Sept. 25 at 7:30 and Sept. 26 at 4: Three of the barge's finest young standbys—the violinist Timothy Fain, the cellist Eric Jacobsen, and the pianist Steven Beck—play Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in D Minor and Copland's trio movement "Vitebsk" in a concert that also includes Mendelssohn's very early Sonata for Violin and Piano in F Minor, Op. 4, and Bruch's "Kol Nidrei," for cello and piano. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

KENT TRITLE
The organist of the New York Philharmonic performs French masterworks by Widor (the Symphony No. 7) and Dupré on the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola's esteemed N. P. Mander instrument. (Park Ave. at 84th St. 212-288-2520. Sept. 26 at 4.)

"CARNAVAL TRILOGY"
Latin-American musicians move easily between the classical and popular realms. The highlight of this concert, which includes works by Heitor Villa-Lobos and Ernesto Nazareth, is a performance of Darius Milhaud's "Saudades do Brasil," a heartfelt tribute by the Provençal composer, who found much to like in the country's hot climate and complex musical rhythms. The performers include Marcelo Bratke, the leading Brazilian pianist, and five percussionists from Grupo Charanga, who hail from the shantytowns of São Paulo. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Sept. 26 at 7.)

JUPITER SYMPHONY CHAMBER PLAYERS
The pianist Adam Neiman and the violinist Stefan Milenkovich are among the featured players in a concert of music by Ravel (the wind-quintet version of "Tombeau de Couperin"), Chausson, Pierne, and Saint-Saëns (the Piano Quartet in B-Flat Major, Op. 41). (Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. 212-799-1259. Sept. 27 at 2 and 7:30.)

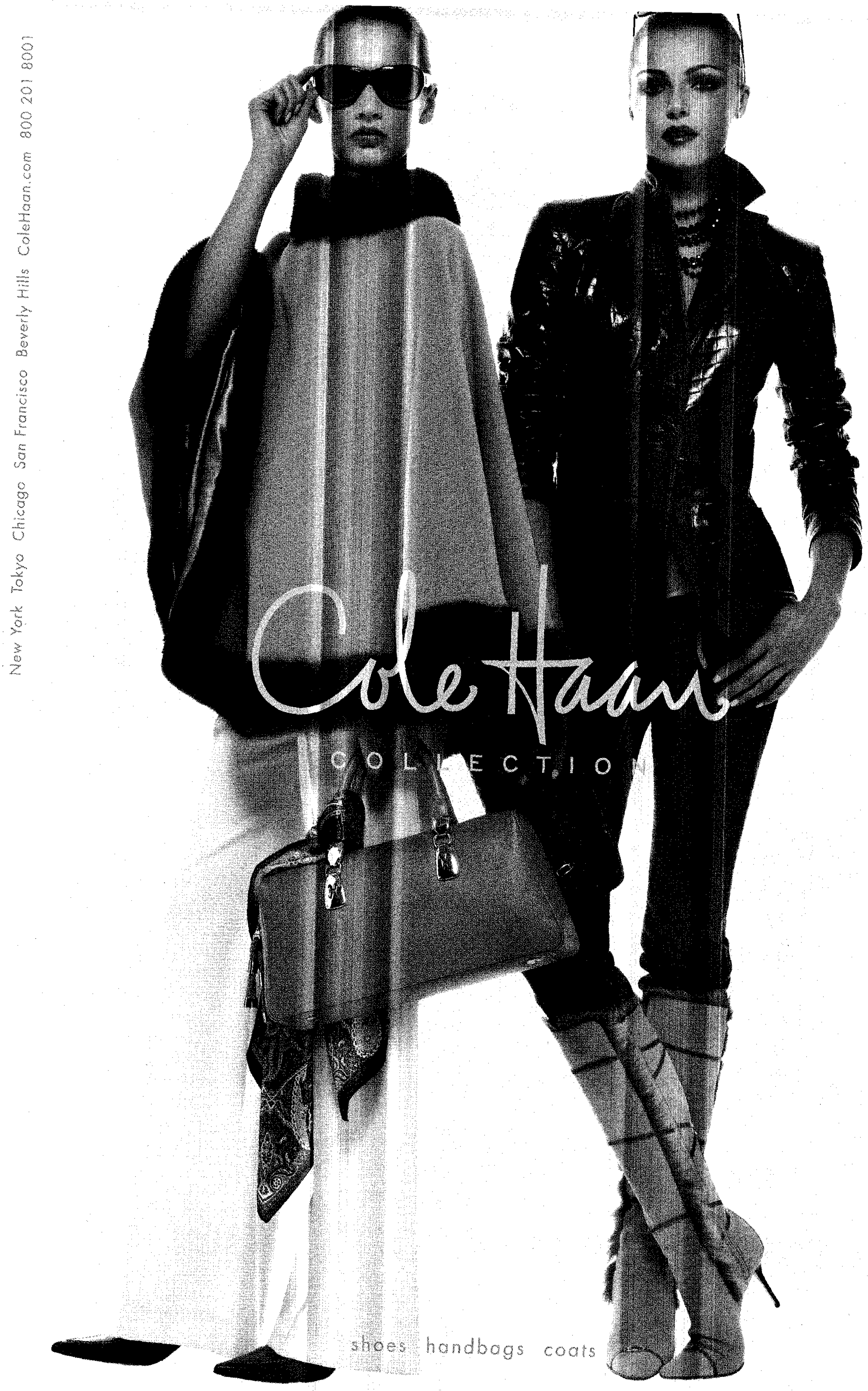
MUSIC BY PHIL KLINE AND SCOTT JOHNSON
Phil Kline, one of downtown's most skillful composer-provocateurs, is not the only composer attracted to the mind-boggling, circumlocutory "poetry" of Donald Rumsfeld's press conferences, but he's certainly the most sophisticated. The "Rumsfeld Songs" will be performed alongside his "Zippo Songs," a more sober contemplation of messages that G.I.s in Vietnam scrawled on their lighters, and with Scott Johnson's suite of electroacoustic works on texts by the radical journalist I. F. Stone. The performers include the vocalist Theo Bleckmann and the string quartet Ethel. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Sept. 28 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"TREASURES FROM THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM: REFLECTIONS IN PRINT"
Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director of the Hermitage, hosts a roundtable discussion about rare Russian books, with James C. Y. Watt, of the Metropolitan Museum, John Lundquist, from the New York Public Library, and Olga Kostiuk, of the Hermitage. Illustrated volumes from the New York Public Library's holdings will be on display. (South Court, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 212-930-0940. Sept. 22 from 2 to 5:30.)

READINGS
Sept. 22 at 7: The Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk reads from the English translation of his new book, "Snow." (192 Books, 192 Tenth Ave., between 21st and 22nd Sts. For more information, call 212-255-4022.) ♦ Sept. 23 at 7:30: Julian Rubinstein offers selections from "Ballad of the Whiskey Robber: A True Story of Bank Heists, Ice Hockey, Transylvanian Pelt Smuggling, Moonlighting Detectives, and Broken Hearts," his account of a late-twentieth-century Eastern European criminal. (Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. No tickets necessary.) ♦ Sept. 27 at 8: Maureen Howard and Cynthia Ozick read from their latest novels. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500.)

MORE TALKS
Sept. 21 at 6:30: *Vanity Fair* presents a debate about whether or not George Bush has made the world a safer place, with the editor Graydon Carter, the writer Christopher Hitchens, the philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, James Woosley, a former C.I.A. director, and others. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. For more information, call 212-286-8450.) ♦ Sept. 23 at 5:30: The engineering historian Joseph Cunningham relates how the subway, which turns a hundred next month, went from an idle dream to a functioning reality. (Science, Industry, and Business Library, Madison Ave. at 34th St. For free reservations, which are required, call 212-592-7000.) ♦ Sept. 23 at 7: The performance artist Laurie Anderson and the pop-music critic Greil Marcus talk about nanotechnology and other subjects of interest to them. (Graduate Center, City University of New York, Fifth Ave. at 34th St. For more information, call 212-817-8215.)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MOVIES OPENING

BLISSFULLY YOURS
Apichatpong Weerasethakul directed this drama about an affair between a Thai woman and a Burmese immigrant. In Thai. Opening Sept. 24. (Anthology Film Archives.)

CHISHOLM '72: UNBOUGHT AND UNBOSSED
A documentary about the Brooklyn Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm's 1972 run for the Presidency. Directed by Shola Lynch. Opening Sept. 24. (BAM Rose Cinemas.)

A DIRTY SHAME
In a new film by John Waters, a repressed woman (Tracy Ullman) becomes a nymphomaniac after a knock to the head. With Selma Blair, Johnny Knoxville, and Chris Isaak. Opening Sept. 24.

FIRST DAUGHTER
The President's daughter (Katie Holmes) heads off to college, in a romantic comedy directed by Forest Whitaker. Opening Sept. 24.

THE FORGOTTEN
Joseph Ruben's psychological thriller is about a mother (Julianne Moore) who learns that she has invented memories of an eight-year-old son. With Gary Sinise and Dominic West. Opening Sept. 24.

INFERNAL AFFAIRS
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Sept. 24. (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and 34th Street Theatre.)

THE LAST SHOT
In a comedy from the writer-director Jeff Nathanson, the new project of an independent filmmaker (Matthew Broderick) is actually, without his knowledge, an F.B.I. sting operation. With Alec Baldwin, Toni Collette, and Tony Shalhoub. Opening Sept. 24.

MIND THE GAP
A drama written and directed by Eric Schaeffer, in which the lives of five unrelated people intersect in New York City. Opening Sept. 24. (Angelika Film Center.)

MOOG
Hans Fjellestad's documentary about Robert Moog, the North Carolina-based pioneer of the modern synthesizer. Opening Sept. 24. (Cinema Village.)

THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Sept. 24. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

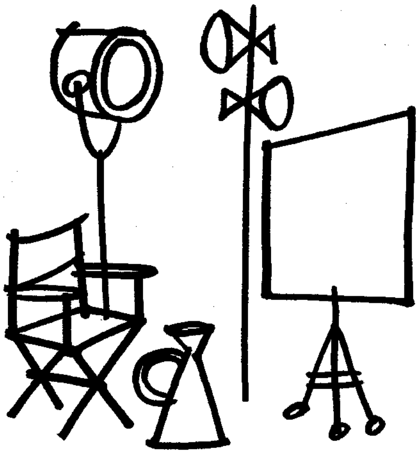
RICK
Bill Pullman plays an arrogant Wall Street manager who plots revenge on his young, superstar boss (Aaron Stanford), in a dark comedy directed by Curtiss Clayton. With Agnes Bruckner and Sandra Oh. Opening Sept. 24.

SEPTEMBER TAPES
A documentary by Christian Johnston, who went to Afghanistan in the weeks after 9/11 to investigate bounty hunters searching for Osama bin Laden. Opening Sept. 24.

SHAUN OF THE DEAD
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening Sept. 24.

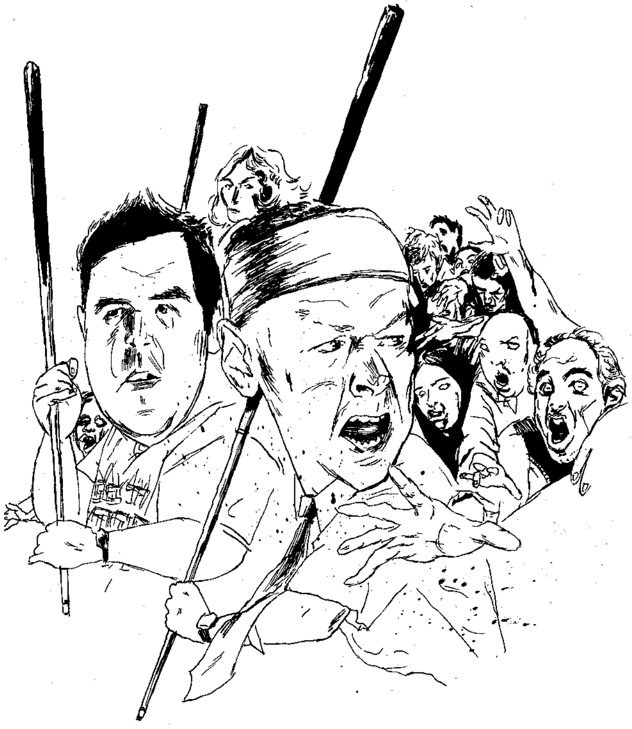
THE TAKE
Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Sept. 22. (Film Forum.)

THE YES MEN
Two pranksters pretend to represent the World Trade Organization, in a satirical documentary about the effects of global free trade. Directed by Chris Smith, Dan Ollman, and Sarah Price. Opening Sept. 24.



FILM NOTES

BEYOND RANGOON
John Boorman's unflinching look at the crackdown on pro-democracy forces in Burma in 1988 meshes with the story of two unlikely friends—an American physician (Patricia Arquette) and a Burmese professor turned freelance guide (U Aung Ko)—who achieve spiritual communion during a harrowing odyssey. As the military dictatorship reduces the country to an internment camp and its citizens to targets, Arquette and Aung Ko travel by car and raft between Burma's backwater and its capital city of Rangoon, and then on to Thailand. The whole last hour is one hairbreadth escape—and epiphany—after another. Random carnage and clangorous upheavals surround them in villages as well as in city streets. Arquette gives the kind of mighty physical performance usually delivered by males in existential action classics like "The Wages of Fear," but she suffuses it with something all her own—she's bulletproof yet vulnerable. And Aung Ko, a Burmese expatriate playing a character named after him, does more than complement Arquette—he arrives at a state of grace. Originally released in 1995.—*Michael Sragow* (BAM Rose Cinemas; Sept. 27.)



The zombie comedy "Shaun of the Dead" opens September 24.

ANDY FRIEDMAN

THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
Fast, faster, and fastest—that's the way the cutting rate goes in this sequel to "The Bourne Identity." The director, Paul Greengrass, is like a man breathing so fast that he never draws much oxygen into his lungs. He arranges pursuits and escapes that fly like arrows. He tears up staid old Moscow in a car chase and turns routine C.I.A. procedural stuff—people looking at computer screens and barking code names and other gibberish at each other—into nerve-racking contests of will. The movie is stripped down for action, and its hero—the survivor of a botched operation who suffers from amnesia—has no identity beyond his superlative physical skills and a vague sense of guilt. Harried, chased, both hunted and hunter, the blunt-nosed Matt Damon is a superhero reduced to pure reflex, yet, by means of his isolation and his stoicism, he becomes almost a romantic figure. With Joan Allen, Brian Cox, Julia Stiles, and Franka Potente.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 8/9 & 16/04.) (Battery Park 11, 84th Street Six-plex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, and Orpheum VII.)

BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS
Evelyn Waugh's early satirical novel "Vile Bodies" has a special brittleness that makes it unique in fiction. The young, upper-class London socialites—the Throbbings and Miles Malpractice and the rest—strike attitudes, rattle on without ever saying what they mean, fall in and out of ridiculous scrapes, and party, party, party. The trouble is, one cannot photograph Waugh's prose, which has the slender, hard clarity of a bitter lyric poem. Stephen Fry's adaptation of the book lays on a heavy dose of period production design and whirls about madly, and, here and there, the actors have funny or touching moments, especially Fenella Woolgar, who plays the daft Agatha Runcible ("too, too shaming"). But mostly the movie feels overwrought and insubstantial. One looks at a handsome young stage actor like Stephen Campbell Moore, who, as the hero, Adam Fenwick-Symes, has penetrating eyes, and one thinks, Why is this fine-looking young man behaving in such a feckless and stupid way?—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, and New York Twin.)

THE BROWN BUNNY
Another enraging, provocative, solipsistic movie from Vincent Gallo, the longtime New York artist, model, photographer, painter, filmmaker, and general pain in the neck. After losing a motorcycle race in New Hampshire, Bud (Gallo) loads his Honda RS 250 into a black van and begins a cross-country trek home to Los Angeles, where he plans to hook up with his girlfriend (Chloë Sevigny). Much of the movie plays in silence, or near silence, as Bud—a romantic loner unconsciously passing across heroic American landscapes—journeys through plains, mountains, and sunset-red skies. The camera is perched over Bud's shoulder as he drives, and we see, through the front window, the road markers endlessly approaching and disappearing, the landscapes falling away—the bluesy trancelike visions, half monotonous, half mesmerizing, of an insomniac driving beyond need or reason. The movie ends with the notorious scene of Chloë Sevigny fellating Gallo, which, for the record, is too oddly framed and distanced to be considered pornographic. In its surly way, the movie casts a spell; the last scene, retroactively, pulls the meanings together. With Cheryl Tiegs as a disconsolate, wordless beauty sitting at a roadside rest stop.—*D.D.* (9/13/04) (Sunshine Cinema.)

BURN!
Gillo Pontecorvo's luxuriant, ecstatic epic about a mid-nineteenth-century slave uprising on a fictitious Spanish-speaking Caribbean island is told from a neo-Marxist, Frantz Fanonian point of view. It is an attempt to plant an insurrectionary fuse within a swashbuckler—to use a popular costume-adventure form to arouse black revolutionary passions. Marlon Brando plays a British agent provocateur who instigates the revolt and then cynically crushes it; he personifies colonial manipulative policies as well as, by implication, the American involvement in Vietnam.

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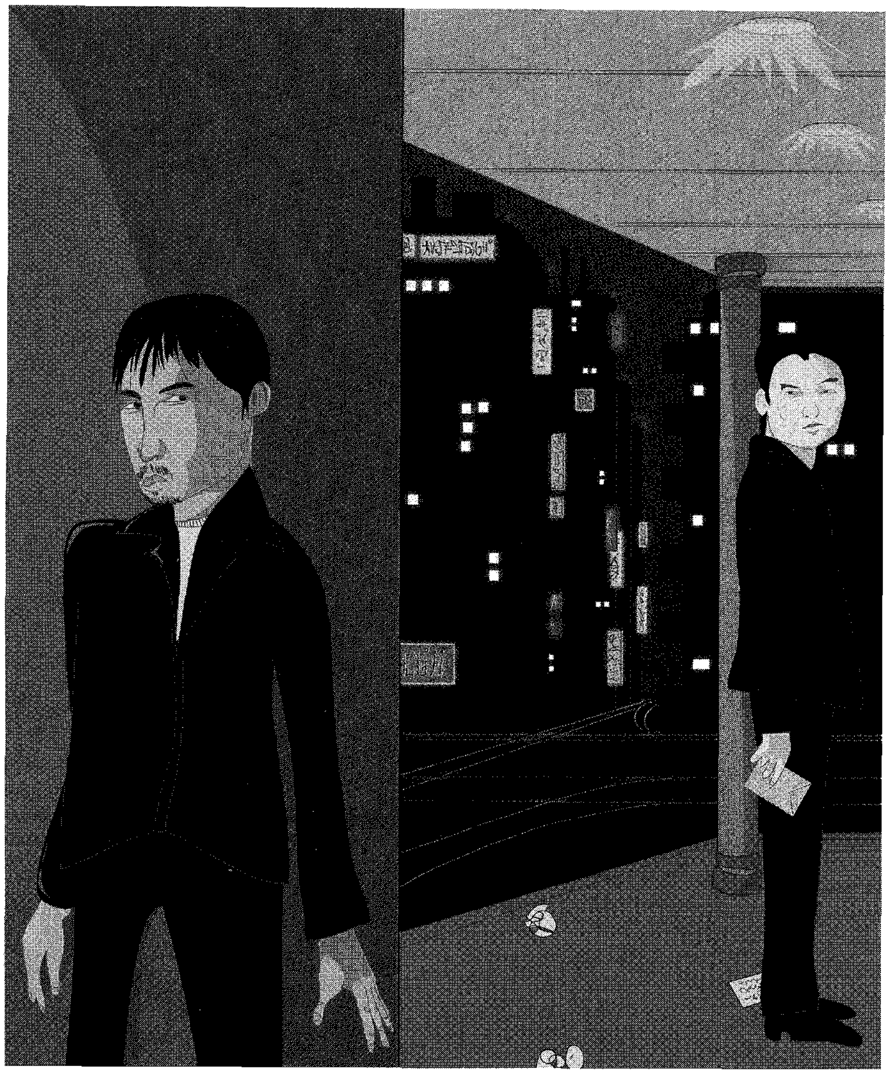
LINDA ALLARD ELLEN TRACY

As Pontecorvo demonstrated in "The Battle of Algiers," he has a true gift for epic filmmaking: he can keep masses of people in movement so we care about them. And here, in his feeling for crowds and battles, for color and images, and for visual rhythms, he's a sensuous, intoxicating director. Originally released in 1969.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; Sept. 22-26.)

CELLULAR

A decent Hollywood thriller, lacking any sense, but entertaining just the same. The veteran screenwriter Larry Cohen, who wrote "Phone Booth," uses the same communication-breakdown gimmick here: a kidnapped woman (Kim Basinger) finds a phone and dials a random number, reaching a mellow surfer (Chris Evans) who becomes hellbent on saving her. The director, David R. Ellis, has fun juggling the two characters (he styles their scenes so that they seem to be in different films), and a cool tension develops between Evans's brightly lit outside world and Basinger's tremulous inside one.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 11, Cinema 2, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.)



Tony Leung and Andy Lau in "Infernal Affairs," opening September 24.

MAXIMILIAN BODE

COLLATERAL

Tom Cruise as an assassin in a silver-gray suit shows up in Los Angeles at dusk and expects to leave at dawn. His job: to eliminate five people involved in an impending federal prosecution of a drug cartel. He bullies a sweet-tempered taxi-driver, one Max Durocher (Jamie Foxx), into providing transportation all through the night, and "Collateral" turns into a kind of convoluted buddy movie, in which the two men engage in a weird, terse dialogue about murder. The plot of "Collateral," which was directed by Michael Mann, is just a movie-ish contrivance, and the violence is no more than thuggishly casual and chic—that is, very enjoyable. But shot by shot, scene by scene, Mann may be the best director in Hollywood. Great actors like Mark Ruffalo, Javier Bardem, and Barry Shabaka Henley have sustained, intricate moments in the pauses between the violent acts.—*D.D.* (8/9 & 16/04) (Battery Park 11, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

CRIMINAL

"Nine Queens," the great Argentinean con-artist movie, gets an American-indie makeover in Gregory Jacobs's twisty remake. John C. Reilly plays the veteran grifter, Diego Luna his apprentice, and Maggie Gyllenhaal his sister, whom he slowly bilks out of her inheritance. The rich character material and the ambitious plot—it's the art of the swindle—are diverting, and the wry performances enjoyable. Viewers of the original will find no surprises here (it's an almost scene-for-scene duplicate), but those who missed the movie the first time around will be pleasantly rewarded.—*B.D.* (Chelsea West, Cinema 1, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.)

GARDEN STATE

Andrew Largeman (Zach Braff), a struggling actor, arrives in his native New Jersey with some extra baggage: his paraplegic mother has possibly committed suicide, he's been on Zoloft since forever, and his one major acting credit is as a retarded quarterback. This would be a difficult burden for any young man, let alone a début movie. But Braff, who also wrote and directed, keeps the tone light with some funny homecoming scenes. There's a party where Large is greeted as "Jersey's De Niro," a run-in with a high-school friend turned cop, and, like a winning bass line, the smirking wit of his slacker friend Mark (Peter Sarsgaard). The movie is also lifted by the presence of Natalie Portman, perhaps the ultimate ethereal home-town girl. Although Braff eventually takes the movie to emotional places where only the extremely tenderhearted will follow, there are a lot of resonant moments and a moody, introspective soundtrack.—*Michael Agger* (Battery Park 11, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

GRASS: A NATION'S BATTLE FOR LIFE

For raw excitement and beauty, no factual celluloid spectacle has ever topped this 1925 documentary record of a seasonal tribal migration in frontier Iran. The trio of Marguerite Harrison (an American foreign correspondent—and a U.S. spy), Merian C. Cooper, and Ernest B. Schoedsack (who went on to make "Chang" and "King Kong") follow the Bakhtiari people of Persia over foaming waters and snow-ridged mountains. What they capture is a horrifying yet lyrical survival drama on a mammoth scale—stories that usually become the stuff of national legend tumble fresh and unfiltered onto the movie screen. As thousands of men, women, and children transport all their worldly goods and livestock to green pastures in the high country, the filmmakers present sights that would be unbelievable were it not for the testimony of the camera. A girl carries a goat on her back up a steep ascent; trailblazers take off their cotton shoes and with bare feet break a path through mountain snow. At one point, the Bakhtiari inflate goatskins to use as raft floats and water wings before they paddle and swim a half-mile-wide, vortex-riddled river; the live goats are the only animals that balk at the crossing. This is one of the great, largely unsung, and (these days) unseen real-life adventures in film history.—*M.S.* (BAM Rose Cinemas; Sept. 26.)

HERO

The Chinese director Zhang Yimou, having previously worked on a restrained scale, decides to go symphonic. Hence the broad thrusts of this movie, which is set two thousand years ago and is designed to show that, at a time when other modern civilizations were still mud-bound, China was putting the final touches on the process of governing by martial arts. The pitiless leader of the Qin kingdom welcomes a young official (Jet Li) who has allegedly killed off three notable assassins, thus insuring peace in the land. His story does not ring true, and we are duly led through a variety of competing versions, each of them shot in different colors, under different skies. The result is not so much a historical epic as a kind of highly determined ballet: dreamy with bloodless violence, relying less on shades of character than on magnificence of gesture, and closer to the Michael Powell of "The Red Shoes" or "Tales of Hoffmann," say, than to the strivings of David Lean. With the unflappable Maggie Cheung. Cinematography by Christopher Doyle. In Mandarin.—*Anthony Lane* (9/6/04) (Battery Park 11, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

INFERNAL AFFAIRS

Some viewers have found themselves challenged by the intricate plot of this film, but anybody used to disentangling an entire bowl of noodles should have no problem. What we have is a little mole-on-mole action, revolving around a couple of Hong Kong cops (Tony Leung and Andy Lau). One works undercover, reporting from the entourage of a drug lord (Eric Tsang). The other works openly for the police department, but secretly as a snitch for the same villain. Neither policeman knows what the other looks like, and it takes a flurry of nervous pursuits and rooftop encounters before the scales fall from their eyes. The movie presents itself as a stack of character studies, but the leads are constructed from layers of impassive cool, and the roles for women—a shrink, an old flame—are comically fleeting. What makes the picture work is its unflagging devotion to the play of gleam and shadow: to a vision of Hong Kong as a natural hotbed of treason and double cross. For those who need a fix of further confusion, two sequels are ready and waiting in the wings. With Anthony Wong as the police chief, who suffers an amazing fall from grace. In Cantonese.—*A.L.* (9/20/04) (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, and 34th Street Theatre.)

MARIA FULL OF GRACE

In this superbly poised independent film, Maria (Catalina Sandino Moreno), a willful seventeen-year-old, unhappily pregnant and stuck in a factory job, agrees to serve as a "mule," carrying in her stomach little pellets of heroin from her native Colombia to New Jersey. Joshua Marston, a thirty-five-year-old N.Y.U. film-school graduate, nosed around Colombia and New York's immigrant neighborhoods before beginning to shoot "Maria," his first full-length feature, and the way he dramatized the material seems instinctively right: he goes step by step, detail by detail, emotion by emotion, eliding nothing, exaggerating nothing. In his calm and lucid way, Marston has made one of the emblematic coming-to-America stories of our time.—*D.D.* (7/26/04) (Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, Sunshine Cinema, and Sutton 1 and 2.)

MEAN CREEK

An outstanding performance by Josh Peck as a young schoolyard bully who's invited out to a party on a river, where a group of kids plan his comeuppance, anchors this suspenseful and elegiac film. The writer and director, Jacob Aaron Estes, gives his terrific cast (which includes Rory Culkin and Scott Mechlowicz) the kind of youthful, textured dialogue that feels naturally captured. The ebb and flow of the scenes generates a nervous power and a haunting sense of the inevitable.—*B.D.* (Cinema Village.)

NAPOLEON DYNAMITE

Deadpan Idaho Dada. The very young married team of Jared Hess (writer and director) and Jerusha Hess (writer), working in Preston, Idaho, Jared's home town, dig into the weird, flat tonalities of loserdom. Their hero, Napoleon (Jon Heder), a high-school senior, can't find anyone to play tetherball with him and gets ritually slammed into lockers by the school toughs. Yet Napoleon is oddly self-possessed; he speaks with an indignant snarl and confronts people without doing them the honor of opening his eyes and looking at them. The Hesses surround this stubborn nerd with wan dreamers and dim failures who don't see themselves as failures—their inexplicable belief in themselves is the movie's most hopeful element. Many of the scenes are brief vignettes punctuated with intentionally awkward physical comedy. The Hesses make jokes out of affectlessness and drabness—the nowheresville prefab tackiness of the houses and the emptiness of a patch of country so remote that not even popular culture touches it. The movie might have worked if it weren't so dead-aired, malicious, and cool.—*D.D.* (6/28/04) (Empire 25, 64th and 2nd, and Sunshine Cinema.)

OPEN WATER

Chris Kentis's expertly made thriller is about a yuppie couple stranded in the Caribbean after they are mistakenly abandoned on a scuba-diving excursion. The handheld-camera work (by Laura Lau) and no-budget ocean settings combine for an unflinchingly realistic ordeal. Kentis drifts his two more-than-game actors (Blanchard Ryan and Daniel Travis) farther and farther out to sea, into shark-infested waters, and the anything-can-happen moments are unrelenting. There's a sublime indifference to suffering in this film that a viewer will find terrifying, stomach-churning, and, maybe, refreshing.—*B.D.* (Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Metro Twin, and Village East Cinemas.)

SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

At first, it might seem curious that the writer-director Kerry Conran chose to use his digital wizardry to re-create the look of Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" and other Expressionist films, but the nineteen-twenties were a time when the language of film was in a fluid, experimental stage, as directors refined their use of montage, transparency, and camera effects. Now, with the increased realism of computer-generated images, directors like Conran seem propelled by a new sense of possibility about what can be accomplished onscreen. In any event, "Sky Captain" is an amazing technical achievement, seamlessly integrating A-list actors into an imaginary world—only, at times, one wishes that this world weren't so dark (literally). Would Conran's computer renderings seem fake in full daylight, or is his commitment to noir just a shade too extreme? His dedication to the celluloid past, however, is beyond question—among the plentiful homages, the immortal Laurence Olivier has a cameo from the crypt. The story is a pastiche of classic sci-fi adventures, with Jude Law and Gwyneth Paltrow as an aviator and reporter on the trail of a doomsday cult. If the movie is powered more by its rousing, brassy score than by its emotional connections, the slack is taken up by the continuous revelation of Conran's visual inventions.—*M.A.* (Battery Park 11, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE TAKE

The director Avi Lewis and the writer Naomi Klein (the author of "No Logo") have done something extraordinary: they have dramatized the effects of the flight of capital. Spending several months in Argentina, the filmmakers befriended workers who were trying to reopen the automotive factory that used to employ them. The men, fallen members of Argentina's once robust middle class, shed tears as they see the ruin and decay of their former shop, and, with the help of a labor advocate, they begin the uphill process of wresting the factory from the absentee owners and running the business as a coöperative. Their soft-spoken leader, Freddy, makes a wonderfully unguarded subject for the camera, and the story also has a tanned, theatrical villain: the former President Carlos Menem, who is running for reëlection and who, in a former incarnation, privatized state-owned companies and linked the Argentinean peso to the U.S. dollar. (The results were disastrous.) One wishes that the filmmakers had taken the time to fully explain a crucial court decision, only because the workers in "The Take" are so admirable, displaying a melancholy eloquence and a genuine revolutionary spirit.—*M.A.* (Film Forum.)

VANITY FAIR

In the hands of the Indian-born director Mira Nair, Thackeray's story of social climbing and tumbling emerges as strong meat, sauced to the point of surfeit by the heat of human greed. Becky Sharp (Reese Witherspoon) hasn't got a penny to her name, or a saving speck of conscience, but she has everything else, and, thus equipped, she begins her climb: a spell in the bosom of the Sedley family, courtesy of her friend Amelia (Romola Garai); a grim sojourn in the moldering mansion of the Crawleys; marriage to the dashing Rawdon (James Purefoy), the romance of which soon falters for lack of funds; and, by way of a Faustian finale, the demonic embrace of Lord Steyne (Gabriel Byrne), for whom money has bought a living death. Nair packs the frame with detail, and she never misses a chance to remind us just how much of the wealth of the early nineteenth century was garnered abroad, at the cost of colonial blood and sweat; but this argument comes to flood the drama, until the tale of Becky herself is in danger of being swamped. The novel thrums with incident, like a reporter's notebook, but onscreen that sort of frenzy is too much; viewers like to know what, or whom, to root for, and without that knowledge they feel lost. With an apparently endless list of British actors, including Jim Broadbent, Bob Hoskins, Eileen Atkins, Geraldine McEwan, and (struggling with the slippery role of George Osborne) Jonathan Rhys Meyers.—*A.L.* (9/6/04) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 11, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

WE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE

In this excellent adaptation of two Andre Dubus novellas from the nineteen-seventies, Laura Dern is a woman married to a mediocre college English teacher (Mark Ruffalo) in New England. When her husband begins an affair with her best friend (Naomi Watts), she takes revenge, with her husband's guilty help, by sleeping with her best friend's husband (Peter Krause). The movie is so beautifully made, and so strong emotionally, that the potentially dreary material is actually thrilling. The director, John Curran, lets the squalling marital fights between Ruffalo and Dern swell and crest without unnecessary emphasis. The entire production is precise, vibrant, and, for all its turmoil, extremely moving. Michael Convertino did the music, and Maryse Alberti did the lovely cinematography, which builds a canopy of nature over the characters, season by season, and lets us know that, unhappy or not, they will survive. The screenplay is by Larry Gross.—*D.D.* (8/30/04) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village Theatre VII.)

WICKER PARK

The American remake of a French thriller that was a hit of sorts in 1996. It was set in Paris, and it starred, among others, Monica Bellucci. Following that example was never going to be easy, but did the result have to be quite so sluggish? Matthew (Josh Hartnett) is meant to be going to China in his capacity as an advertising executive, instead of which he stays behind in a freezing Chicago in his capacity as a total schmuck, vainly attempting to trace a former love (Diane Kruger). Needless to say, he finds himself duped by a loopy imposter (Rose Byrne), who takes the beloved's place. This is all hugely unconvincing, especially since the hero already has a fiancée (Jessica Paré) who seems a more alluring prospect than either of her replacements. The screenwriter Brandon Boyce and the director Paul McGuigan drag us through a forest of flashbacks, thus insuring that we never know exactly where we are in the history of Matthew's folly; Hartnett does his best, hampered only by a recurrent, grieving expression which suggests that somebody is standing beside the camera and blowing smoke in his eyes, very hard. With Matthew Lillard, who camps it up as a straight shoe salesman. And so the mysteries accrue.—*A.L.* (9/20/04) (Battery Park 11, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

ALSO PLAYING

BUSH'S BRAIN
Angelika Film Center.

THE CORPORATION
Film Forum.

GOODBYE, DRAGON INN
Cinema Village.

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.

INCIDENT AT LOCH NESS
Sunshine Cinema.

INTIMATE STRANGERS
Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

MR. 3000
Battery Park 16, East 86th Street Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

SILVER CITY
BAM Rose Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village Theatre VII.

WHEN WILL I BE LOVED
Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.

WIMBLEDON
Battery Park 11, Beekman, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, and Lincoln Square.

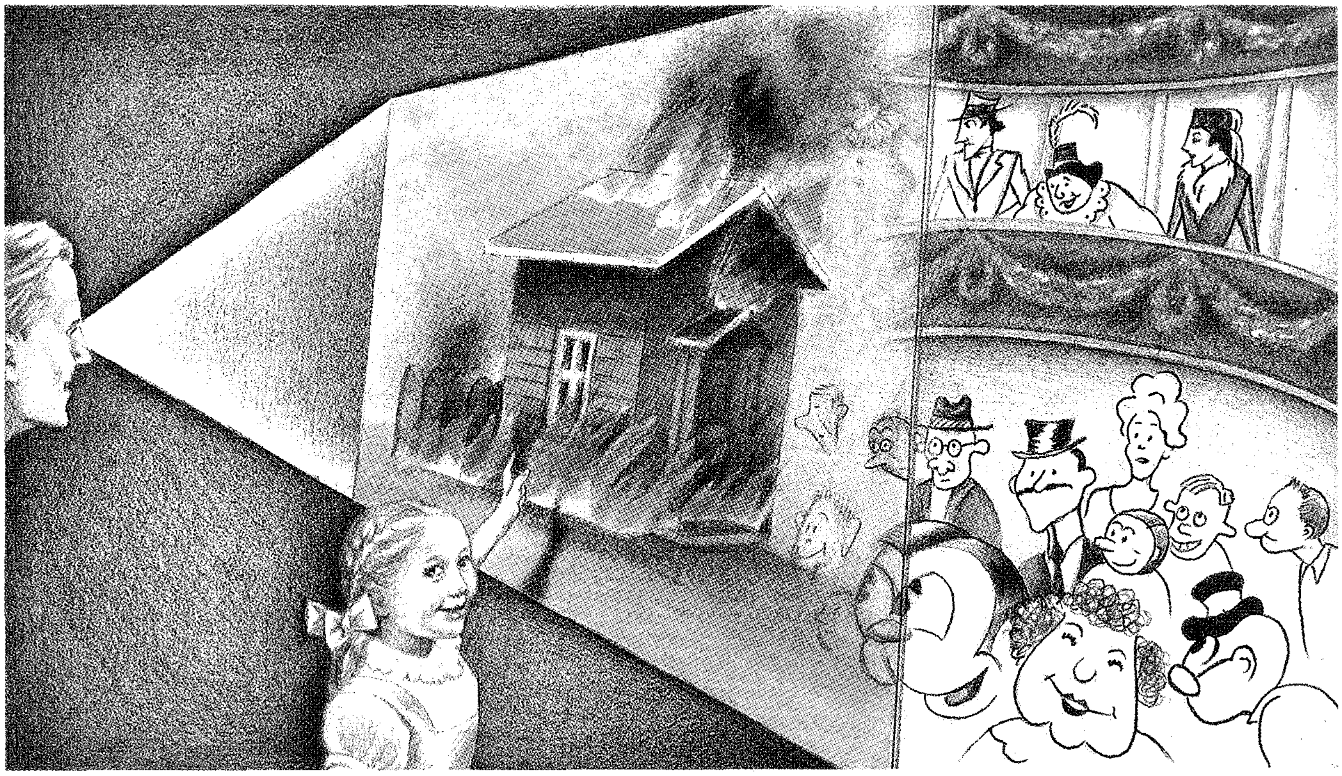
ZELARY
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 212-777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.

Battery Park 11, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 66th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
Pioneer Theatre, 155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182).
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.



Rick Prelinger's new work "Panorama Ephemera," a fascinating collage of industrial, advertising, educational, and amateur films from his own collection, screened recently at Anthology Film Archives and can be downloaded for free at www.archive.org.

FRESCHET

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Repertory nights. Sept. 24 at 7:30 and Sept. 25-26 at 6:30: "Jules and Jim" (1961, François Truffaut; in French). ♦ Through Sept. 26: A series of films about American politics. Sept. 25 at 2: "Bob Roberts" (1992, Tim Robbins). ♦ Sept. 25 at 4: "Tanner on Tanner" (2004, Robert Altman). ♦ Sept. 26 at 2: Highlights from Presidential debates. ♦ Sept. 26 at 4:30: "Chisholm '72: Unbought and Unbossed" (2004, Shola Lynch).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5110)—Through Sept. 26: A retrospective of the cinematographer and director Babette Mangolte. Sept. 22-23 at 7: "The Models of Pickpocket" (2003). ♦ Sept. 22 at 9 and Sept. 25 at 5: "The Sky on Location" (1982). ♦ Sept. 23 and Sept. 26 at 9: "Four Pieces by Morris" (1993). ♦ Sept. 24 at 7: "Visible Cities" (1991). ♦ Sept. 24 at 9: "The Camera: Je" (1977). ♦ Sept. 25 at 3: "The Cold Eye" (1980). ♦ Sept. 25 at 7: "Jeanne Dielmann, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles" (1975, Chantal Akerman; in French). ♦ Sept. 26 at 4:30: "Artist on Fire" (1987). ♦ Sept. 26 at 7: "Lives of Performers" (1972, Yvonne Rainer). ♦ "*The Onion* Presents." Sept. 23 at 7 and 10: "Urgh! A Music War" (1981, Derek Burbidge).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Through Oct. 5: John Boorman films. Sept. 22 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "The Exorcist II" (1977). ♦ Sept. 27 at 6 and 9: "Beyond Rangoon" (†). ♦ Sept. 28 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Leo the Last" (1970). ♦ Sept. 23-26: "The Pordenone Silent Film Weekend." Sept. 23 at 7:30: "Casanova" (1927, Alexandre Volkoff). ♦ Sept. 24 at 7:30: "Treasures from a Chest," previously lost films from various directors. ♦ Sept. 25 at 7: "The Marriage Circle" (1924, Ernst Lubitsch). ♦ Sept. 25 at 9:15: Shorts by D. W. Griffith (1913). ♦ Sept. 26 at 4:30: "Clash of the Wolves" (1925, Noel M. Smith). ♦ Sept. 26 at 6:50: "Grass: A Nation's Battle for Life" (†).

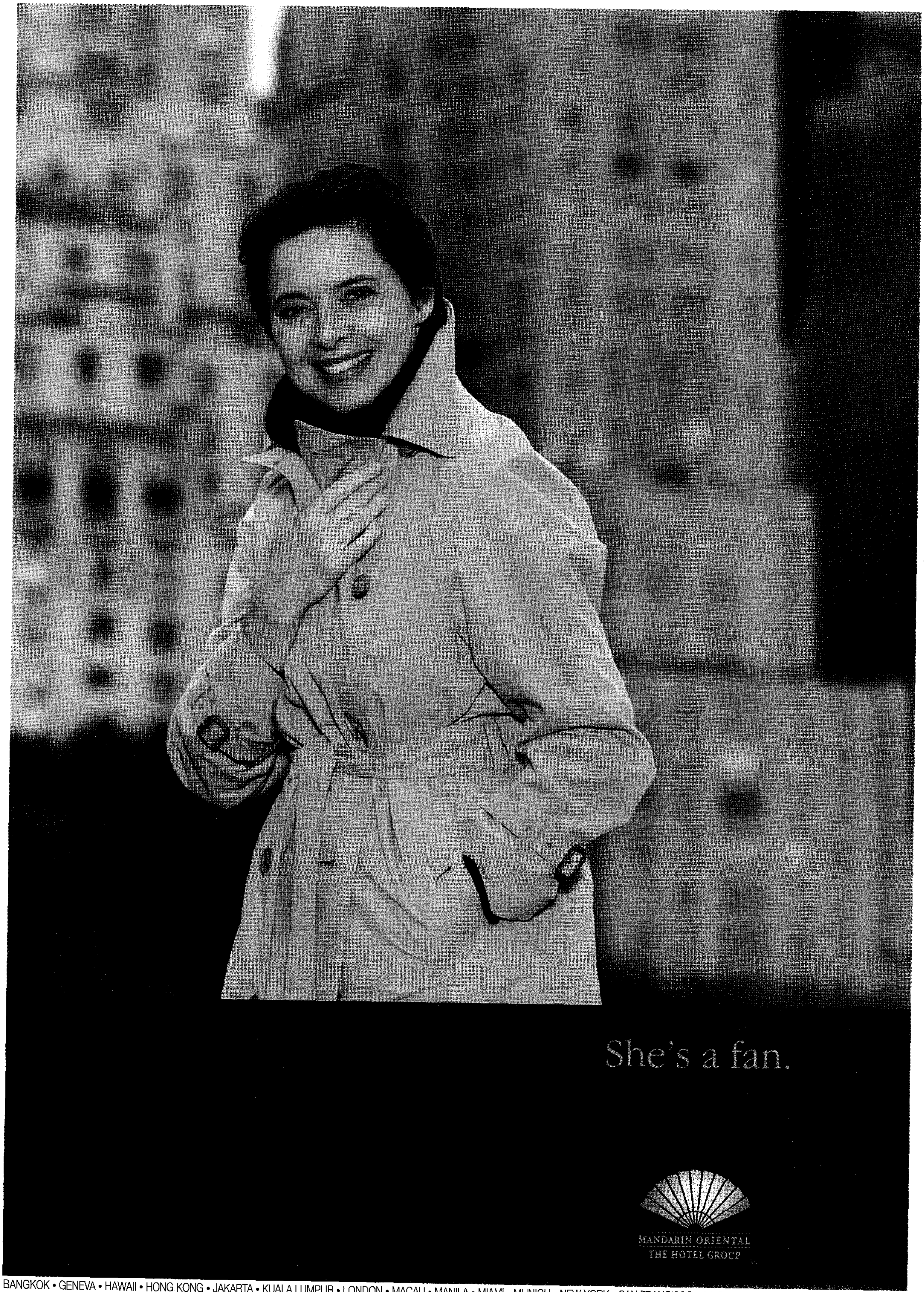
FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)— Sept. 22-23: Two days of special events. Sept. 22 at 1, 4:50, and 8:50: Color shorts from the nineteen-thirties. ♦ Sept. 22 at 3 and 7: The film preservationist Robert Gitt presents a history of movie color. ♦ Sept. 23 at 1, 4:20, and 7:30: New restorations of Vitaphone films. ♦ Sept. 23 at 2:50, 6:10, and 9:20: A restored print of "The Second Floor Mystery" (1930, Roy Del Ruth). ♦ Through Oct. 7: The complete, uncut version of Gillo Pontecorvo's "Burn" (†). Sept. 24-28 at 1:10, 3:40, 7, and 9:30.

FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—Through Dec. 21: "Sisters: Dorléac and Deneuve." Sept. 28 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Cul-de-Sac" (1996, Roman Polanski).

SUNSHINE CINEMA
143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—Midnight movies. Sept. 24-25: "Jaws" (1975, Steven Spielberg).

THALIA THEATRE
Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—Sept. 22 at 8: "Perlman in Shanghai" (2004, Allan Miller).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Sept. 29: "Latinbeat 2004: Recent Films from Latin America." All films are in Spanish. Sept. 22 at 1 and Sept. 26 at 9:30: "Burnt Money" (2000, Marcelo Piñeyro). ♦ Sept. 22 at 3:30, Sept. 24 at 9:15, and Sept. 26 at 7: "Whisky, Romeo, Zulu" (2004, Enrique Piñeyro). ♦ Sept. 22 at 6:15: "Love Hurts" (2002, Fernando Sariñana). ♦ Sept. 22 at 8:30: "What the Eye Doesn't See" (2003, Francisco J. Lombardi). ♦ Sept. 23 at 1 and Sept. 28 at 9: "Wild Horses" (1995, Piñeyro). ♦ Sept. 23 at 3:30, Sept. 25 at 9, and Sept. 27 at 6:30: "City of Men" (2003, Fernando Meirelles et al.). ♦ Sept. 23 at 6:15 and Sept. 25 at 3: "Pulque Song" (2003, Everardo González). ♦ Sept. 23 at 8, Sept. 24 at 3:30, and Sept. 25 at 5: "Saturday" (2003, Matías Bize). ♦ Sept. 23 at 9:30: "Tango, a Strange Turn" (2004, Mercedes García Guevara). ♦ Sept. 24 and Sept. 26 at 5: "What Sebastían Dreamt" (2003, Rodrigo Rey Rosa). ♦ Sept. 24 at 1 and Sept. 27 at 9: "Tango Feroz, the Legend of Tanguito" (1992, Piñeyro). ♦ Sept. 24 at 7, Sept. 26 at 1, and Sept. 27 at 4:30: "Pin Boy" (2004, Ana Poliak). ♦ Sept. 25 at 1: "Journey to the Sea" (2003, Guillermo Casanova). ♦ Sept. 25 at 7 and Sept. 26 at 3:10: "Ana and the Others" (2003, Celina Murga).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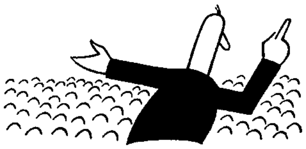
THE NEW YORKER

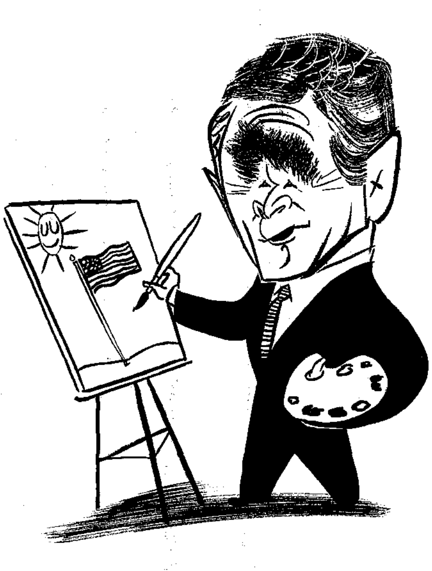
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
THE POLITICAL WAR



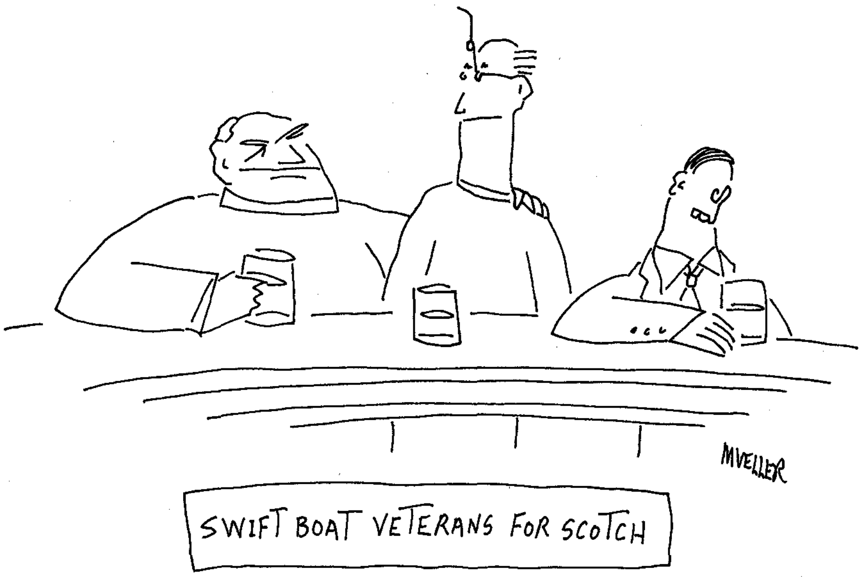
Earlier this year, the United States Agency for International Development, or U.S.A.I.D., hired a team of independent experts to go to Iraq and evaluate the agency's programs there. The experts came back with a mixed review that included plenty of reason for worry: the reconstruction of Iraq was taking place in an ad-hoc fashion, without a consistent strategy, without the meaningful participation or advice of Iraqis, within paralyzing security constraints, and amid unrealistic claims of success. But something happened to the report on the way to publication. U.S.A.I.D. kept sending parts of it back for revision, draft after draft, weeding out criticism, until the agency finally approved a version for internal use which one member of the team called "a whitewash" of his findings. Another expert said, "It's so political, everything going on out there. They just didn't want to hear any bad news." Pointing out that some of the numbers posted on the agency's Web site were overly optimistic, he concluded, "They like to make their sausage their way."

This would be a minor footnote in the history of the Iraq war, if only the entire story didn't read the same. President Bush has been making the sausage his way from the beginning, and his way is to politicize. He forced a congressional vote on the war just before the 2002 midterm elections. He trumpeted selective and misleading intelligence. He displayed intense devotion to classifying government documents, except when there was political advantage in declassifying them. He fired or sidelined government officials and military officers who told the American public what the Administration didn't want it to hear. He released forecasts of the war's cost that quickly became obsolete, and then he ignored the need for massive expenditures until a crucial half year in Iraq had been lost. His communications office in Baghdad issued frequently incredible accounts of the progress of the war and the reconstruction. He staffed the occupation with large numbers of political loyalists who turned out to be incompetent. According to Marine officers and American officials in Iraq, he ordered and then called off critical military operations in Falluja against the wishes of his commanders, with no apparent strategic plan. He made sure that blame for the abuses at Abu Ghraib settled almost entirely on the shoulders of low-ranking troops. And then, in the middle of the election campaign, he changed the subject.



No one can now doubt the effectiveness of the President's political operation. Here's one measure: between May and September, the number of Iraq stories that made page 1 of the *Times* and the Washington *Post* dropped by more than a third. During the same period, the percentage of Americans who support the President's handling of the war increased. It's the mark of a truly brilliant reëlection campaign that these trends at home are occurring against a background of ever-increasing violence and despair in Iraq. The latest reports from mainstream think tanks, such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies, show every indicator of progress moving in the wrong direction. In July, the National Intelligence Council issued a classified and quite gloomy analysis of Iraq which had no effect on the President's rhetoric or on his policy. After a year and a half of improvising and muddling through, there seems to be no clear way forward and no good way out. But because the President—as his chief of staff, Andrew Card, recently said—regards Americans as ten-year-old children, don't expect to hear an hon-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL


SWIFT BOAT VETERANS FOR SCOTCH
MUELLER

• •

est discussion about any of this from the White House. (The President's party, however, is trying to force congress to vote, just before the election, on a constitutional amendment to ban flag burning—no doubt to bring the country a little closer to victory in Iraq.)

The problem with making sausage the President's way—other than the fact that it deceives the public, precludes a serious debate, bitterly divides the body politic when war requires unity, exposes American soldiers to greater risk, substitutes half measures for thoroughgoing efforts, and insures that no one will be held accountable for mistakes that will never be corrected—is that it doesn't work. What determines success in this war is what happens in Iraq and how Iraqis perceive it. If U.S.A.I.D. releases a report that prettifies the truth, officials here might breathe easier for a while, but it won't speed up the reconstruction of Iraq. Covering up failures only widens the gap in perception between Washington and Baghdad—which, in turn, makes Washington less capable of grasping the reality of Iraq and responding to it. Eventually, the failures announce themselves anyway—in a series of suicide bombings, a slow attrition of Iraqi confidence, a sudden insurrection. War, unlike budget forecasts and campaign coverage, is quite merciless with falsehood.

In refusing to look at Iraq honestly, President Bush has made defeat there more likely. This failing is only the most important repetition of a recurring theme in the war against radical Islam: the distance between Bush's soaring, often inspiring language and the insufficiency of his actions. When he speaks, as he did at the Republican Convention, about the power of freedom to change the world, he is sounding deep notes in the American political psyche. His opponent comes nowhere close to making such music. But if Iraq looks nothing like the President's vision—if Iraq is visibly deteriorating, and no one in authority will admit it—the speeches can produce only illusion or cynicism. In what may be an extended case of overcompensation, so much of the President's conduct in the war has become an assertion of personal will. Bush's wartime hero, Winston Churchill, offered his countrymen nothing but blood, toil, tears, and sweat. Bush offers optimistic forecasts, permanent tax cuts, and his own stirring resolve.

As the campaign moves toward its finish, Senator Kerry seems unable to point any of this out, let alone exploit it. On Iraq, he has said almost everything possible, which makes it difficult for him to say anything. It's understandable that the war fills him with ambivalence. The President's actions have led the country into a blind alley; there's no new strategy for Kerry to propose, and the press should stop insisting that he come up with one when the candidate who started the war feels no such obligation. But the Senator has allowed the public to think that the President, against all the evidence of his record, will fight the war in Iraq and the larger war against radical Islam with more success. If Kerry loses the election, this will be the reason.

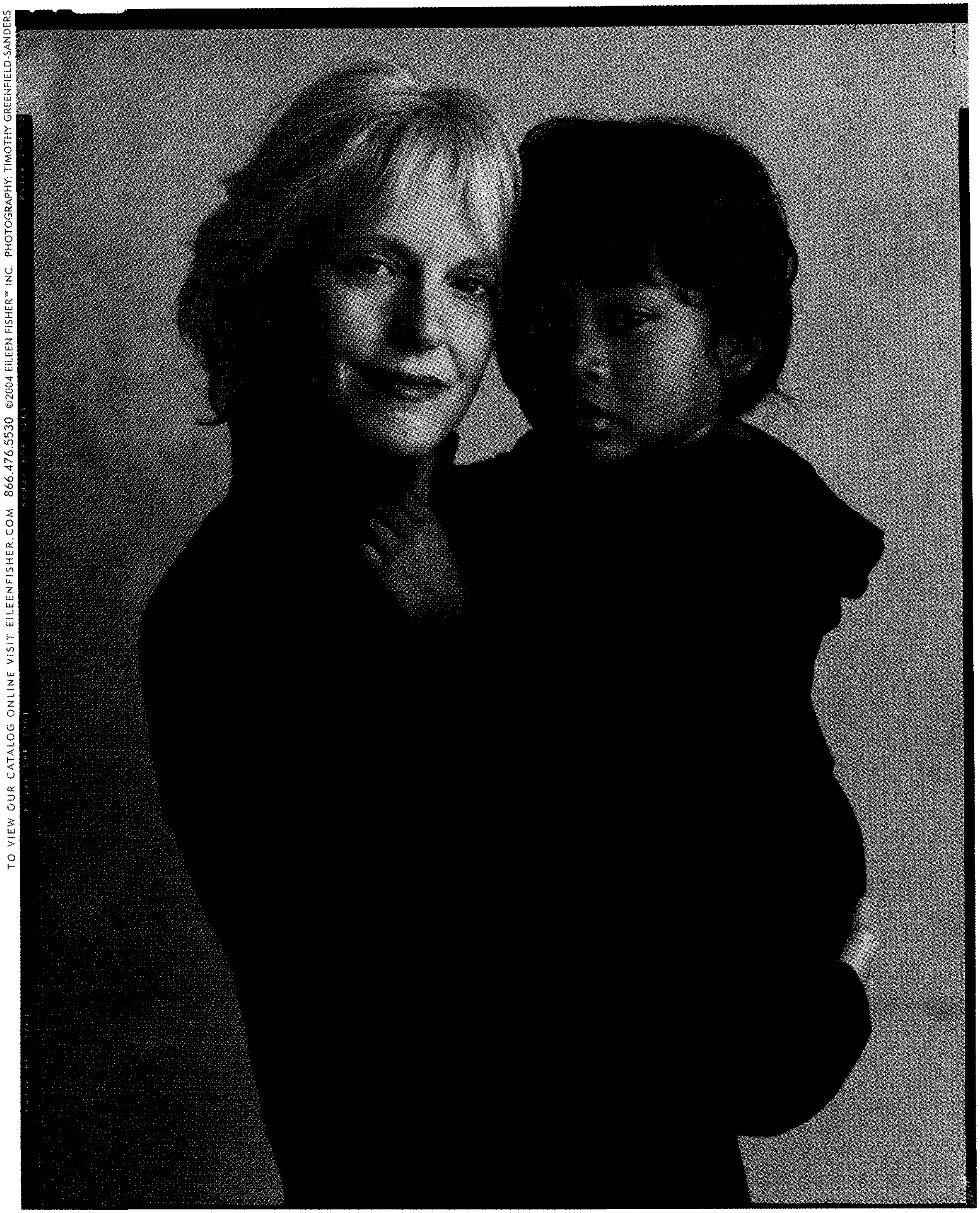
—*George Packer*

THE BENCH
BLACKED OUT

A government censor rarely displays a highly refined sense of irony. Consider the reaction to a lawsuit filed earlier this year by the American Civil Liberties Union to have part of the U.S.A. Patriot Act declared unconstitutional. In Manhattan federal district court, the A.C.L.U. is challenging a provision that allows the F.B.I. to obtain a citizen's personal records—say, which Web sites he visits—without notice to him and without judicial oversight. "The existence of the lawsuit was gagged for nearly a month," Ann Beeson, an A.C.L.U. lawyer on the case, said the other day. "We had to get the Justice Department's approval even to disclose that we had filed the case, and then we had to fight with them over every line in our legal papers. They used a big black Magic Marker to censor stuff on almost every page."

Curiously, one of the passages that the Justice Department censors blacked out, in a letter from the A.C.L.U. to Judge Victor Marrero, was a quotation from a 1972 decision by the United States Supreme Court: "The danger to political dissent is acute where the Government attempts to act under so vague a concept as the power to protect 'domestic security.' Given the difficulty of defining the domestic security interest, the danger of abuse in acting to protect that interest becomes apparent." In a case about the abuse of government power, how could the government censor the Supreme Court's warning about the abuse of government power?

Geoffrey Stone, a former dean and provost of the University of Chicago law school, has a theory. "If you look at the whole letter, you see that they probably had some flunky go through and censor every reference to 'security' or 'national security,' " he said. "Government censorship always acts in a way that is



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risk-averse. It's not that they are bad people. Every incentive they have is to overcensor. If someone under-censors and lets something slip through, his head is in a noose with his bosses." Stone added, "It's just the inevitable craziness of the mind-set of censorship."

Stone has spent the last three years thinking about questions like this one, as he worked on a new book, "Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime from the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism," which will be published next month. His immersion in the subject proved alternately heartening and depressing. "The only time the federal government has tried to restrict criticism of government policies or officers is during wartime," he said last week, in his office at the New York University Law School, where he is a visiting professor. "In eighty per cent of our history, happily, there has been no effort to restrict that kind of expression."

But Stone found the persistence of wartime censorship—and what he views as its underlying function—troubling. "Censorship is attractive because it doesn't cost billions of dollars, and it sends the message that we are serious," he said. "If you want to create an atmosphere in which people are willing to go off and die in a war, censorship is an effective way of making them feel that it's worth it."

He pointed out that being at war has moved even otherwise ardent defenders of free speech, such as President Woodrow Wilson, to change their positions. "Wilson had been very articulate about free speech before the First World War, but then he had a war where we had not been attacked and needed a way to motivate people, just like the war we have now," Stone said, referring to Wilson's notorious Committee on Public Information. "The patterns recur."

So, it seems, do the absurdities. Earlier this summer, the government yielded on some of its more preposterous redactions in the Patriot Act case, like the quotation from the Supreme Court, but the A.C.L.U. is still not allowed to disclose such mundane facts as the identity of its client, who is now referred to only as "an Internet service provider." (The U.S. Attorney's office declined to comment.) However, the government has made some changes in the way it goes about marking up documents. "We're finding that in other cases the censors are apparently realizing that it looks really bad when they delete large sections with that black Magic Marker," the A.C.L.U.'s Beeson said. "So now they are starting to use whiteout instead."

—*Jeffrey Toobin*

PUBLICATION DAY
SWING VOTER

Harry Kourounis, who has been shuttling business tycoons and celebrities around New York City in limousines and town cars since 1982, has a saying: "First-rate people get first-class service, and second-rate people get first-class service." Last week, he provided his first-class service to the biographer Kitty Kelley, who was in town for a few days to promote her latest unauthorized work, "The Family: The Real Story of the Bush Dynasty." Kourounis considers Kelley "first-rate all the way," though, in light of her irreverent portraits of such Republican icons as Frank Sinatra and the Reagans, he guessed that her political views didn't jibe with his own.

Kourounis's busiest day—not to mention Kelley's—was Tuesday, the official release date of "The Family," whose seven hundred and five pages are filled with allegations of cocaine use, infidelity, nepotism, mendacity, and general crumminess. Just before seven in the morning, Kourounis picked up Kelley, her husband, her agent, her editor, and her publicist at a hotel off Columbus Circle.

"Harry, have you heard from your daughter-in-law?" she asked him.

"Not today," he said.

"She has a master's and a Ph.D., right?" Kelley said.

"Two master's, and she's working on her Ph.D."

"She sounds like a brilliant girl."

"I think the two of you would get along, most definitely."

Kelley is a diminutive woman with a blond bob, a heart-shaped face, and large blue eyes. She is sixty-two, but she still has a quality that might be called pixieish. Wearing black sling-back Manolo Blahniks and a gray pants suit with a brooch shaped like either a flower or a jellyfish, Kelley seemed ready for a day whose schedule included eight interviews, a working breakfast, a few errands, and a book party, followed by a dinner in her honor. "I love publication day," she said. "It's like a combination of your first Holy Communion, your bat mitzvah, and being queen of the prom."

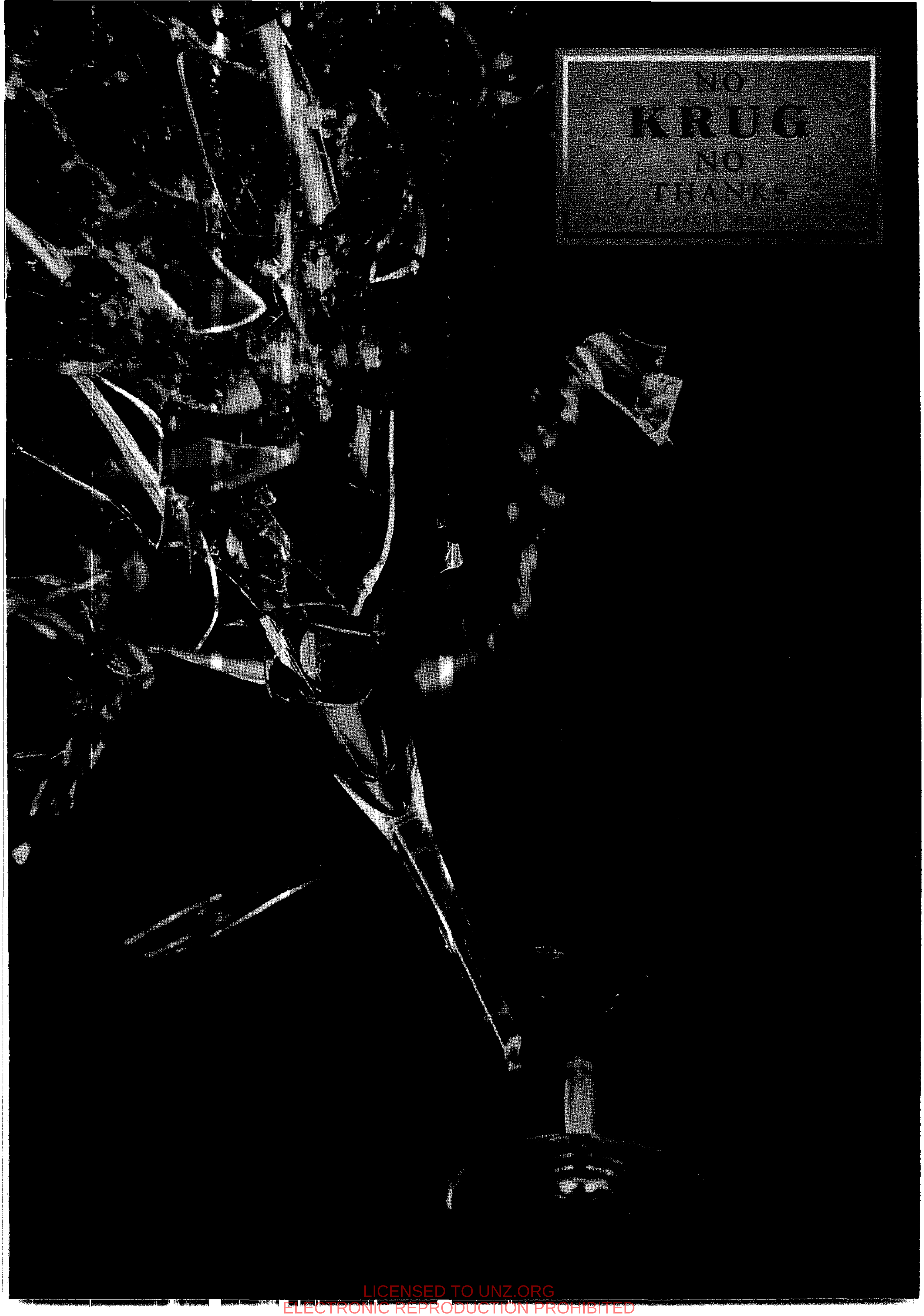
In this particular instance, there were also elements of excommunication, cross-examination, and sorority rush. Disdain for her work came in many varieties, all of which she parried with characteristically coquettish aplomb. First off, there was the strenuous disapproval of Matt Lauer, on the "Today" show: "Most people, no matter what their politics, would say that, if a family has three generations of public service, the reality has to be that there are some nice things that need to be said about them. And why aren't they in the book? . . . *Where are the positives, Kitty?*" (Afterward, her husband remarked, "I would have said, 'Hey, Matt, who does your hair?' " Kelley replied, "Oh, honey, you're getting feisty and protective. How sweet.") On CNN, she weathered genial put-downs from Aaron Brown: "Saying that a Kitty Kelley book is an unauthorized biography is like saying what bank robber Willie Sutton did was make unauthorized withdrawals." Al Franken, on Air America Radio, went relatively easy on her during the interview, then, when it was over, held up the author's photograph on the back of the book, and said to her, "Wow, you look great there—what the fuck happened?"

After one interview, her editor said, "You know what bothers the press about you?"

"I'm short and I'm fat?" Kelley said.

"They don't get what you get. And they're jealous."

If Kourounis, a balding, solidly built man with a handlebar mustache, was aware of the controversy surrounding his passenger, he didn't show it. He talked about coming to this country from Greece, in 1958, and about his house in Florida, where he hopes to go in November to vote in the general election. "I don't think Bush is sharp enough to run the country, but I'll probably vote for him," Kourounis said. "There's just something about Kerry I don't like." Kourounis confessed that he had voted, against his better judgment, for Michael Dukakis in 1988, because of their shared heritage and because "I knew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KRUG CHAMPAGNE [illegible]

him from the business—I drove him a few times when he came to New York."

No matter who wins in November, there is one issue he'd like to see addressed. "Sometimes," he said, "I'll be standing in front of my car, waiting for a client, and a cop will come over and say, 'Hey, asshole. Move!' Why am I an asshole just for standing on the sidewalk?"

Kourounis told Kelley about an encounter he'd just had with a traffic cop who had ordered him to move his car. When Kourounis explained whom he was waiting for and asked if he wanted to look through a copy of her book, the cop said, "I don't read that kind of stuff." Kourounis went on, "That made me want to rethink my political views. People who won't read something just because they disagree—it's not right. I sometimes even read *The Nation*."

Kourounis pulled his wallet from his back pocket and removed a card. "The most important thing I've gotten since I came to this country is this—my voter-registration card," he said to Kelley, his voice thick with emotion. "I'd like you to sign it for me, so that when I go to vote I can look at it and know that I have options."

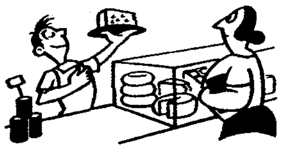
Kelley gasped softly and brought her left hand to her heart. "Oh, Harry," she said. "Oh, wow."

"This just means so much to us," her husband said.

"Oh, Harry."

—*Adam Green*

PARTISANS
BIG CHEESE



While touring Wisconsin last month, George W. Bush made an unscheduled stop at the Cady Cheese Factory, in Wilson, which turns out torpedoes of Colby and pepper Jack for machine-slicing at the deli counter. The candidate's swing-state snack made Fox News, and the *Times* ran a wire photo showing Bush holding a platter of curds surrounded by half a dozen locals in hairnets.

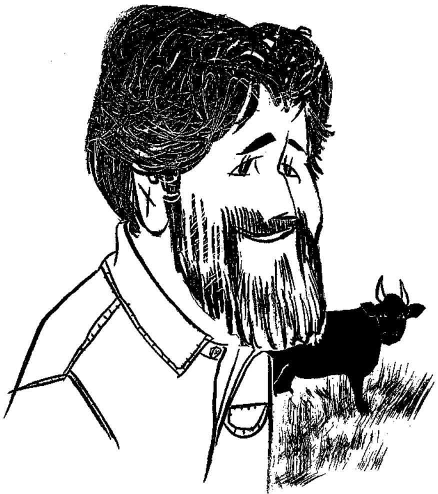
"I'm sure it was bad cheese," Jonathan White said the other day, at Bobolink Dairy, the two-hundred-acre farm on the New York–New Jersey border that he runs with his wife, Nina. The Whites are artisanal cheesemakers who believe that cows should live outside and eat grass. "We don't buy them food, we don't buy them medicine," White said.

White, who is forty-eight and wears a beard, gets a twitch in his right cheek when he becomes agitated about the "microbiological destiny" of milk or the No Child Left Behind Act. "We felt that we had a big stake in the upcoming election," he said. "But we're not in a position to donate a lot of money. Then a light bulb flashed, and I remembered about Annie Proulx."

Most fans of "The Shipping News" have not read "The Complete Dairy Foods Cookbook." But it was this 1982 work, co-written by Proulx, that taught White about Thomas Jefferson's inaugural cheese. On a July morning in 1801, the citizens of Cheshire, Massachusetts, pooled their cows' milk in the town's cider press, producing a four-foot-wide, 1,235-pound wheel of cheese celebrating the Federalist defeat. That winter, as the cheese made a three-week journey by sleigh to the capital, crowds turned out to see it. The White House served the mammoth cheese, as it came to be known, on New Year's Day, and for the next couple of years.

It wasn't the last time a big cheese entered the White House. In 1835, a farmer in Oswego County, New York, honored Andrew Jackson with a fourteen-hundred-pound Cheddar. It sat, aging, in the White House lobby for two years before Jackson scheduled a levee, or public reception, on Washington's birthday. Guests polished off the cheese in two hours. Friends of Jackson's successor, Martin Van Buren, hoped to make mammoth cheeses an annual tradition, but it ended abruptly after visitors ground curds into the East Room carpet. Still, at least one more got through: in 1928, Calvin Coolidge accepted a hundred-and-forty-seven-pound domestic Swiss cheese from Wisconsinites grateful for a heavy tariff he imposed on imports from Switzerland. The son of a Vermont cheese manufacturer, Coolidge maintained a private stash; in the afternoon, he would make cheese sandwiches for himself and his Secret Service detail.

Jonathan White, too, has brought cheese to the White House: he provisioned several of Clinton's state dinners and taught a mozzarella workshop in the kitchen. So he decided to make a Kerry inaugural cheese. Rather than rallying the neighbors, he settled on something "grand in its concept, not in its physical size." This past spring, the Whites acquired eight Kerry cattle, a rare heritage breed. "From 2000 B.C. to about 1960, they were the backbone of the Irish economy," White said, standing in his milking barn. The Whites named the stocky black bull John, though he proved to be such an efficient breeder that they were tempted to rename him Bill.



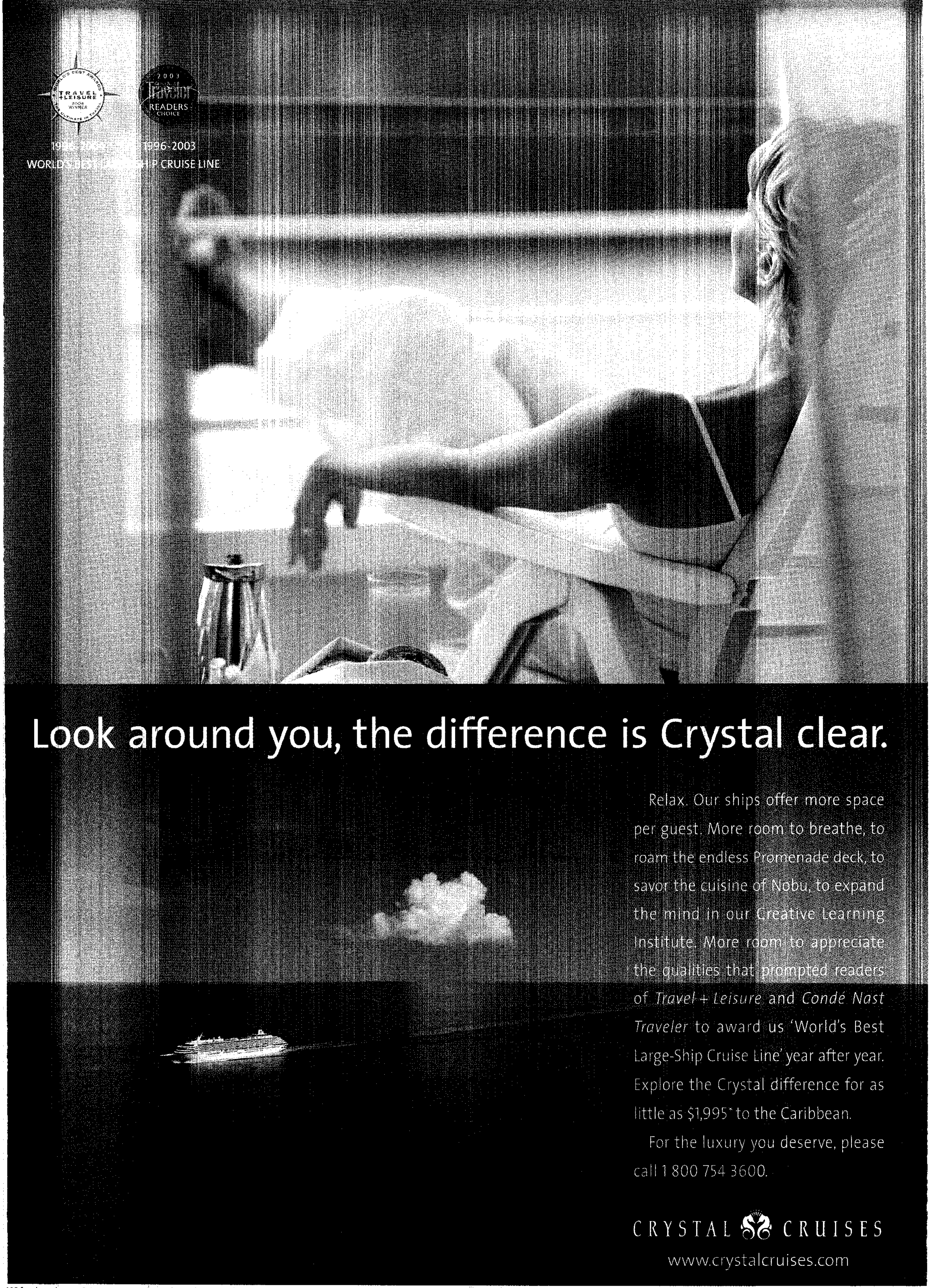
Jonathan White

White makes one wheel of Kerry cheese each day. Weighing just under three pounds, it lacks the populist appeal of its Presidential forebears, but White's hands-on technique—no antibiotics, no heating or cooling—approximates Jefferson-era technology. "The fact is, the old way is easier, cheaper, makes better cheese, and is good for the soil," he said.

White will keep making Kerry-milk cheeses this fall, and they will eventually be offered for sale at farmers' markets and through the Bobolink Dairy Web site. If the Democrats prevail in November, White will telephone the White House chef, Walter Scheib, to offer him a ripe one for the inauguration. Early signs show that a Kerry inaugural cheese would be well received. When Teresa Heinz Kerry was served a locally produced Limburger sandwich on the campaign trail in Wisconsin she declared, "Cheese that doesn't taste is just empty calories."

Ultimately, however, the fate of the Kerry cheese is up to the voters. "If this turns out to be the Dewey inaugural cheese, well, we tried," White said.

—*Blake Eskin*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THE FINANCIAL PAGE
PENNY-WISE

The notion that we live in a global economy is now a commonplace. Supply chains extend halfway around the planet, and no respectable corporation would dare show its face without at least pretending to have a well-defined global strategy. The funny thing about the global economy, though, is how much of the globe has been left out of it. Four billion people still earn less than four dollars a day, and as far as the global economy is concerned they hardly exist—except, of course, as cheap labor. After all, if you were the C.E.O. of a big company, whom would you rather have as customers: the rural poor in Uttar Pradesh or upscale suburbanites in greater Phoenix?

But perhaps it makes better sense for companies to see the poor as patrons worthy of their solicitations. Though developing nations don't have much money on a per-capita basis, together they control enormous sums; the ten biggest developing countries have about fourteen trillion dollars in annual purchasing power. Most corporations assume that the world's poor are so preoccupied with getting by that they're indifferent to the allure of consumer goods or new technology, but the evidence suggests that poor consumers are similar to rich ones: they like to shop. "Poor people want quality services, they want high standards for their products, and they want them at an affordable price," C. K. Prahalad, the author of a new book about fighting global poverty called "The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid," told me recently. "This is a huge opportunity for businesses."

It may seem improbable that you can make money by selling to people who don't have much, but, as Prahalad demonstrates, companies that have actually bothered to try are flourishing. Unilever helped create the shampoo market in India, and now owns a large share of it. Hindustan Lever has built a lucrative business in Africa and India selling brand-name consumer goods, from lotion to salt. Casas Bahia, a department-store chain, now sells more than five billion dollars' worth of brand-name electronics and appliances to working-class Brazilians every year. Big companies often disdain what they think of as the low-end market, because they make a lot less money on each sale than they do selling high-end goods. But, because of the sheer size of that market, they can still make a lot of money on it. This isn't exactly a radical concept: it's what companies like Pillsbury, Quaker Oats, and Singer Sewing Machine did in America in the nineteenth century and, to a certain extent, what Wal-Mart is doing now.

Bringing technology to local farmers and merchants in developing countries has proved lucrative as well. In South Africa, Standard Bank has set up an A.T.M. banking network for low-income customers, which has widely expanded their access to credit. The Indian conglomerate I.T.C. has equipped hundreds of homes in the rural province of Madhya Pradesh with computer kiosks that are hooked up to the Internet; soy farmers use them to monitor prices and sell their crops. These are subsistence farmers, many with tiny plots of land and little bargaining power. The computers enable them to circumvent middlemen, who tend to charge excessive commissions, and consult the Chicago Board of Trade to determine what prices to charge.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

It isn't altruism that inspires companies to make these investments; it's the prospect of profit. The profit motive, indecorous though it may seem, may represent the best chance the poor have to reap some of globalization's benefits. Through the years, the poor have received assistance from innumerable government agencies and nonprofit organizations, and they've been an exploitable labor source, but they have almost never been treated simply as customers. And that's a pity, not because the private sector is inherently superior to the public sector but because, in the world we live in, businesses control an enormous amount of skill, manpower, and capital. If you're a customer, you reap the benefits of all that. If you're not, you don't.

Critics of consumer capitalism like to think that consumers are manipulated and controlled by those who seek to sell them things, but for the most part it's the other way around: companies must make what consumers want and deliver it at the lowest possible price. In a market economy, the best thing to be—aside from an oil company, perhaps—is a customer.

Consumerism, of course, has its pitfalls and is hardly a cure-all. But if companies started trying to sell things to the poor it would have immediate consequences, chief among them a reduction of the so-called poverty penalty. It's expensive to be poor. Poor people pay more to eat, buy, and borrow, because they have so few choices and so little bargaining power, especially in the developing world. Moneylenders, purchasing agents, and retail stores typically have local monopolies that allow them to gouge their customers. If more companies reach these customers, prices will fall.

There are, as ever, monumental prejudices and impediments to overcome. Executives scoff at pennies. Anti-globalization activists take customerization to mean McDonaldization. Then, you have to contend with the local monopolists who make huge sums of money selling to the poor, and the local government officials who profit from helping keep those monopolies in place. To tap the fortune at the bottom of the pyramid, we may have to "save capitalism from the capitalists," as the economists Raghuram Rajan and Luigi Zingales put it. Oddly, it's corporations like Unilever and I.T.C. that are best positioned to do so. Big business has spent a lot of time pretending to make up for all the bad things it's done in the developing world. Now it should try to make up for all the good things it hasn't.

—*James Surowiecki*

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LETTER FROM IBIZA

THE SHOOT

How Mert and Marcus make everyone look magnificent.

BY NICK PAUMGARTEN

Off the southwestern shore of the Spanish island of Ibiza, a hump of limestone rises more than twelve hundred feet out of the sea. It is called Es Vedrà and is said to possess extraordinary powers. Sailors and scuba divers have described compasses and gauges going haywire in its midst. Through the years, there have been reports of strange emanations of light and of sightings of U.F.O.s, and in the mid-nineteenth century a Carmelite priest who spent several weeks on the rocks claimed to have been visited there by the Virgin Mary.

Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott's photographs for a Pop magazine spread (left), and fo

Es Vedrà is also the centerpiece of the view from the terrace of a house on Ibiza that belongs to the fashion photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott. Mert and Marcus, as they are known (Mert is pronounced "Matt"), live and work in a whitewashed ten-bedroom Moorish villa situated on a promontory overlooking the Mediterranean. After sharing an apartment in London for seven years, they bought the house last fall and have been using it since then as a photography studio and base of operations, a mini-Cinecittà. It is called Palacio de Salomon and is supposedly built along the lines of Solomon's palace in Jerusalem. One of Mert and Marcus's favorite things about the place is the way that variations in the wind and the light cause the character of Es Vedrà to change, from beacon to beast and back again. Recently, they hired a boat and went out there to take pictures, but the steep and rocky terrain proved inhospitable to fashion photography. When I visited them, this summer, in order to watch them shoot a twenty-page spread for *Pop*, an arty British fashion magazine, Es Vedrà was the first thing Mert pointed out to me, to let me know that it was also reputed to be the Isle of the Sirens, from the Odyssey.

"There are supposed to be the Sirens living there, trapping the salesmen," Mert said. "Magnetic energies luring people." By salesmen, Mert, who is a native of Turkey and is prone, in English, at least, to occasional idiomatic deviations, meant sailors, but there are many ways in which the current incarnation of

Ibiza—isle of hulking night clubs, all-night Ecstasy raves, foam parties, and fashion shoots—might represent, for a traveller from London or Madrid, a potentially hull-dashing diversion.

W, both 2003; self-portrait, 2004. When they work, they take turns with the camera, sometimes snatching it from each other.

Mert and Marcus have been luring a lot of people to Ibiza recently. Success has elevated them into the ranks of those to whom the world must come—the world, in this case, being hairdressers, stylists, models, makeup artists, and manicurists. Katie Grand, the editor of *Pop* and Mert and Marcus's longtime friend and collaborator, told me, "Their finances have changed and their power has changed, which is why we're here and not in a studio in King's Cross."

Throughout the spring and summer, the pair had a new shoot nearly every week. They photographed fall advertising campaigns for Louis Vuitton, Roberto Cavalli, Missoni, Giorgio Armani, Hugo Boss, Bulgari, and Gucci perfume, as well as editorial spreads for *Vogue*, *W*, and *Pop*. Suddenly, their pictures are everywhere—or, at least, that is what is said of them. It is fair to say, anyway, that Mert and Marcus have been turning up increasingly often. The other thing that is said of them is that they came out of nowhere. "They seem to have just *appeared*," Grace Coddington, the creative director of *Vogue*, said. Or, as Ivan Bart, the director of IMG Models, told the *Times* not long ago, "They are the new fabulous."

Mert, 33, is Turkish; Marcus, 34, is Welsh. Mert is short and chubby; Marcus is tall and slim. Mert is jovial, with a husky laugh; Marcus is measured, with a mischievous grin. When they work, they take turns with the camera—sometimes snatching it from each other—and although Mert's taste may incline a bit more toward campy glamour and Marcus's more toward ironic cool, the results rarely, if ever, betray the dominance of one man's aesthetic over the other's. "When you're looking at the film, you can't tell which of them had the camera," Grand said.

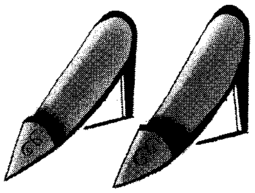
Their pictures tend to be luminous, as though the subjects were lit from within, and to feature odd backgrounds, stark contrasts, and rich color. The models' flesh and hair can appear to be made of plastic. Many of the images have a staged, formal quality, like the nineteen-thirties Hollywood photographs of George Hurrell, but with a sheen that suits the video-game age: Jean Harlow meets S1m0ne. At times, the women seem almost synthetic, and in some respects they are, because Mert and Marcus do a great deal of post-production work. They are known for manipulating their pictures. They shoot digitally, and then alter the images on a computer screen, using Photoshop to brighten or change colors and contours. They do not hide the fact that they do so. "It's very fakey, fakey, fakey, but that's what it's supposed to be," Coddington said. Even real things seem fake: a year ago, they travelled, at great expense, to the desert of Dubai to shoot a campaign for Louis Vuitton. In the end, the dunes looked computer-generated anyway.

"It's like a painting," Mert told me. "You can paint a scene. The next day, you think, I wish I had a dog. So you draw a dog on it. You can achieve what you want eventually, even if you didn't do it that way. You seem freer than when 'what you shot is what you got.' "

You can also enhance the appearance of your subjects. "Mert and Marcus are at the top of the list," Patrick McCarthy, the editorial director of *W*, told me. "One reason is that they make people look magnificent." Consequently, the line on Mert and Marcus is that they are restoring glamour to fashion photography (after a period of relative grubbiness), but this, according to Dennis Freedman, the creative director of *W*, is "a simplistic and superficial response to their work." He said, "There is a veneer, certainly, of glamour, but, if you look more closely, it is darker than that. There is an artificiality about it that can be upsetting."

Freedman likened a spread in this month's issue of *W*, shot on the rocks of Ibiza, to the surreal dreamscapes of Giorgio de Chirico, but Mert and Marcus owe a lot more to the confections of Guy Bourdin and Helmut Newton. When Newton died, last winter, they made a little shrine to him out of cactuses, in back of the house in Ibiza. "I loved his photography," Mert said. "When I was a kid, I thought it was all real. I thought, Wow, what things are happening out there! Look at that woman nude in the hotel walking in heels!"

Before my visit to Ibiza, I'd heard about a shoot at the house earlier in the year, during which a member of the production crew had come around a corner and stumbled on Marcus, in his and Mert's bedroom, trying on a green Cavalli dress. (When I asked Mert and Marcus about this, Mert said, "Marcus, your father's going to kill you!") Soon, everyone who was staying at the house was raiding the racks of clothing that had been provided by designers for the models to wear during the shoot. The men squeezed into dresses, blouses, and skirts, and submitted to Mert and Marcus's directions for an impromptu runway show. One of the photo assistants, a young Italian named Federico, seemed a little too manly in a lace ensemble from Dolce & Gabbana, but for the most part the fellows managed to look splendid.



I was thinking of this story, and of how I'd look in lace, when I arrived for the first time at the vast gravel parking lot of Palacio de Salomon. When I got out of the car, a tall, lanky woman, wearing a bright-green terry-cloth robe and chalky white face paint, with a great mane of blond hair and long pale feet, emerged from the house, crossed the lot, and stooped to reënter the house through a squat blue door. She looked, oddly, like a man in drag. After a moment, I followed her. The door opened onto a cloistered, sunlit courtyard cluttered with palms, laurel, bougainvillea, and, in the middle, an empty fountain ringed with potted plants. At the far end of the courtyard, through a series of Moorish archways, was a marble pavilion that gave way to a swimming pool and a spectacular view of the coast and the sea. More than a dozen people milled about, among them two more skinny girls in brightly colored robes. The one I had seen in the lot was now lounging on a daybed in the pavilion, partially veiled by mosquito netting that luffed in the breeze. She no longer looked anything like a man. Nearby, in an open-air kitchen at one end of the pavilion, a woman in an apron was making fresh orange juice and a batch of zucchini fritters. Another woman, in a skimpy green Peter Pan outfit, was bent over a pair of iPods, choosing songs. The current selection was Kate Bush: "Ooh, there is thunder in our hearts." Coming upon this place, one half expected to be greeted by Auric Goldfinger or Hugo Drax.

Mert and Marcus were in the pavilion, taking pictures. Mert, in a French sailor's shirt and baggy terry-cloth cargo shorts, had the camera, and Marcus, in a Mickey Mouse T-shirt and pin-striped cotton pants, stood off to the side, observing the results on a monitor—a laptop on a tripod, with a light shade over it. Mert was directing a model, in thick makeup and a vintage Valentino dress, who stood in front of a background that consisted of a giant sheet of heavy white paper. "A little bit higher the mouth," he called out. "A little less teeth. That's lovely." He snapped a shot, then stopped to look at the monitor. "I've got a doubt with the eyes. I've got a doubt with the glitter."

"It's a bit Kiss at the moment," Grand (who, in appearance, is a bit Natalie Merchant, with an endearing gap between her front teeth) said.

"I'd rather it was more New Romantic," Mert said.

In previous weeks, Mert and Marcus had talked often on the phone with Grand and e-mailed old pictures and references back and forth to develop ideas for the shoot. Now they were planning to spend this first day experimenting with hair styles and makeup, in order to establish the models as characters and refine their working theme.

"New Romantic—it's a look from the eighties," Mert explained to me.

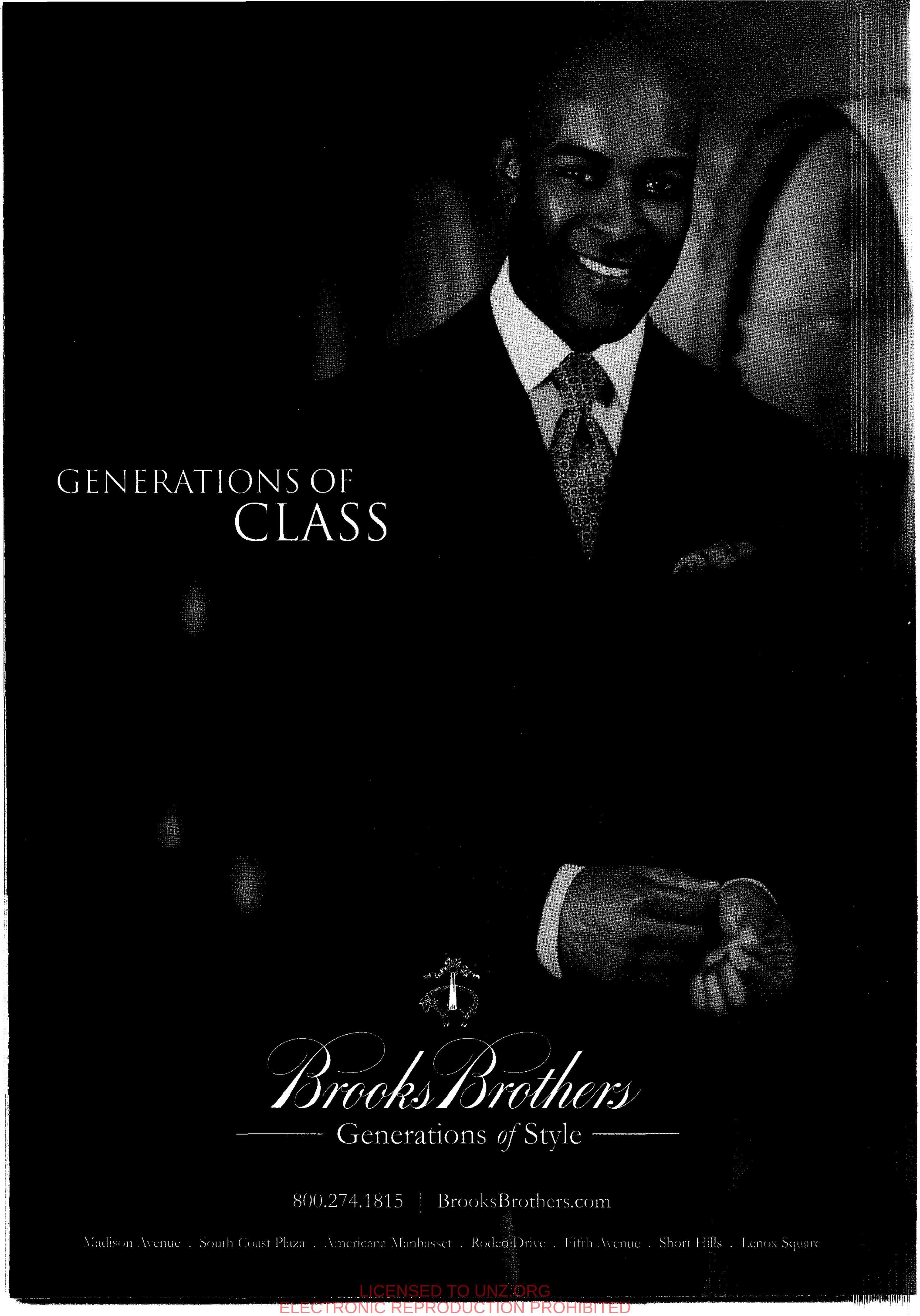
"Human League, Adam Ant—did you not have that in the States?" Marcus said.

They had fixed on this look after watching the runway shows in Milan and Paris last spring. "There was something Pre-Raphaelite about the shows," Marcus said. "And we were thinking, How could we do it more clubby, a little younger, a little more self-made?"

"Today, we're trying to make something different that's not stupid—something strange but not weird or silly," Mert said. "It's a bit like the movies. I hate it when they dress the girls in the best clothes, the highest fashion, the best hair. We want to play with character. We want to know the girl. It adds a meaning to all the paint on her face."

The face painter was Charlotte Tilbury, an affable, prankable redhead from London, who is the creative director of Helena Rubinstein, the cosmetics firm. Tilbury's mother, Patsy Dodd, has lived on Ibiza for thirty years and serves as Mert and Marcus's den mother, fixer, and Ibizan head of production. Dodd, who declared herself "infamous," is a veteran of the scene, though it's unclear exactly what scene she's a veteran of; it involved various Rolling Stones and Continental princes. The hair man was Guido Palau, another Londoner, who had a dark beard and a nicely parted flop of hair that looked as casually prepared as it was designed to. He had on a plain gray T-shirt and baggy cargo shorts slung low to expose the band of his Calvin Klein skivvies. Guido and Charlotte, along with Grand, have been Mert and Marcus's closest collaborators through the years. Each of them had a pair of assistants, who seemed simultaneously harried and morose in a way that suggested an unflappability peculiar to fashion shoots and big-city hospitals. Among the other helpers were Federico and his mustachioed sidekick Ascanio, the Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of Palacio de Salomon, and Semra, the iPod d.j. and fetcher of juice and tea, who grew up in Turkey with Mert. The models were Raquel, Romina, Lily, and Xenia, a pale, rather featureless crop. "These are all new girls for us, except Raquel," Mert said. "We usually use big girls for *Pop*." The big girls they tend to work with are Kate Moss, Gisele Bündchen, and Amber Valletta. There was also a long-haired Brazilian teen-age male model named Robson, who spent the entire shoot sitting cross-armed in a deck chair, speaking to no one, reading nothing. The curious combination of glumness and vivacity around the house brought to mind an abject dictatorship gussied up for the benefit of a visiting dignitary.

When a new model, with a new outfit and new makeup and hair, comes on the set, Mert and Marcus take fewer than a dozen shots, because with the



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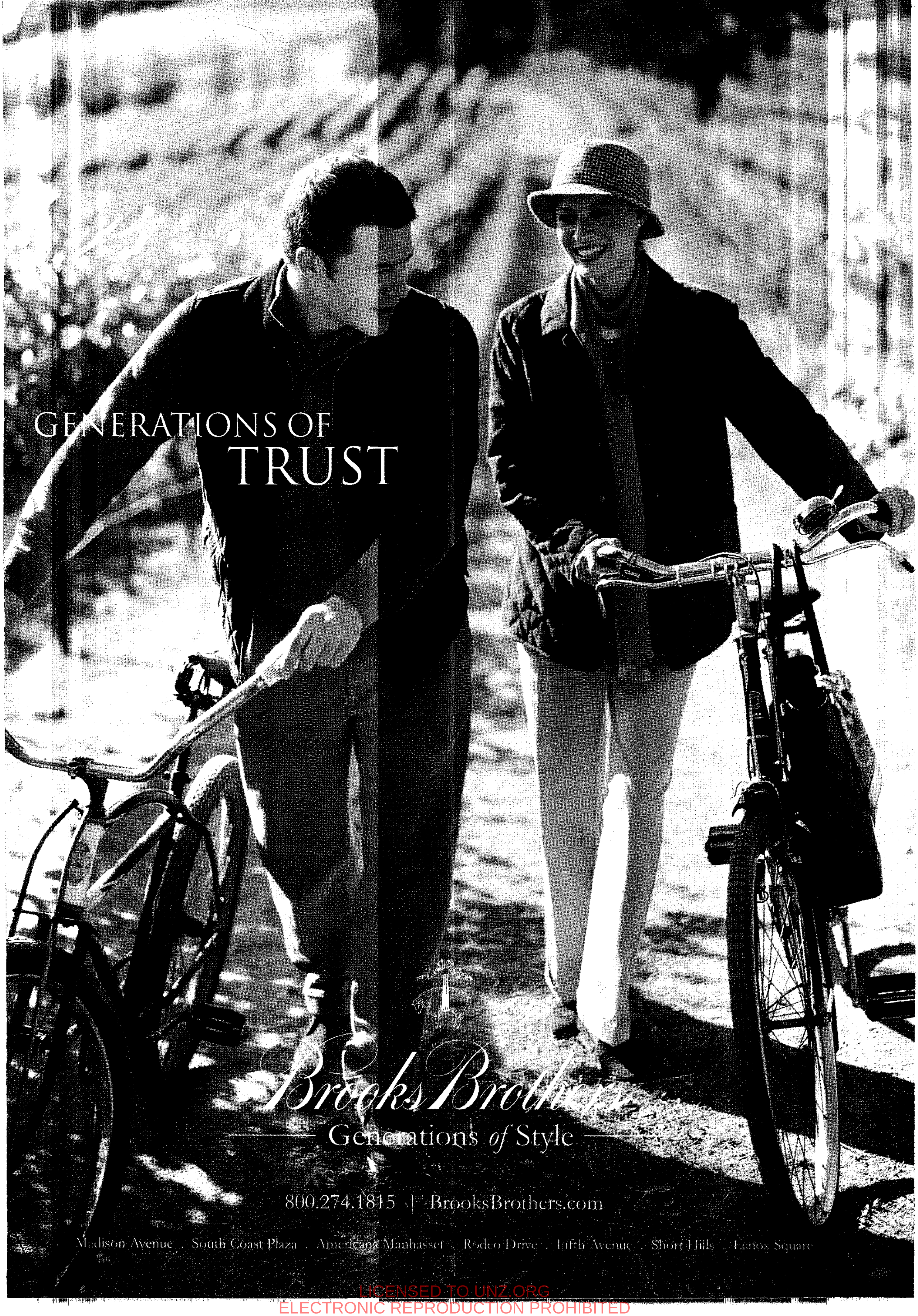
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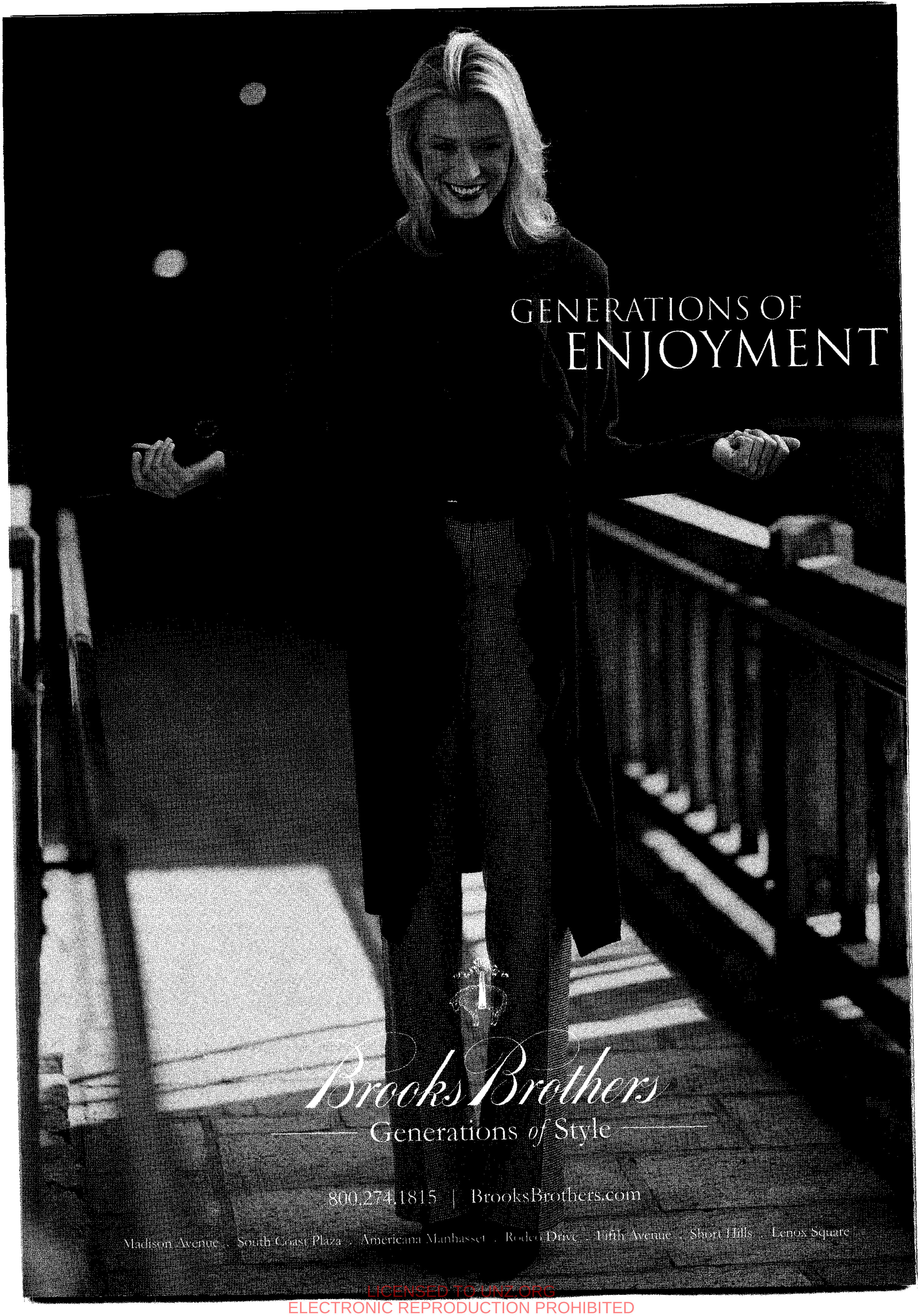
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digital setup they can see what each one looks like as soon as they take it (the camera, a modified Hasselblad, is connected to the laptop). They take their time making adjustments before capturing each shot. They are a long way from the old stereotype of the fashion photographer as profligate soloist shooting roll after roll, like David Hemmings in "Blow-Up." Their photographic process more resembles a movie set, or even a football game: Mert or Marcus takes a picture, then everyone huddles around the monitor to look at the result and discuss the next shot, as the assistants run to and fro like water boys.

"I like that one. One more, Marcus?"

"Or do you want to try what's-her-name?"

Marcus moved languidly, hips out, shoulders back, and often had an apple or a nectarine in his hand. As he ate, he tucked his elbow into his hip and appraised whatever needed appraising: model, makeup, Mert. Mert bounced, broke into sing-along ("I'm your Venus / I'm your fire / At your desire"), and cadged cigarettes, packs of which were everywhere. Between photo sessions, the men occasionally repaired to another part of the house with Grand to hash over their progress. "Maybe it'll be easier for Charlotte if we go and talk about eighties débutantes," Grand said at one point, as the three of them took the sun on the patio outside Mert and Marcus's bedroom. They trooped over to the makeup-and-hair station, in a part of the cloister across the courtyard from the racks of clothes. Lily, in the green robe, sat expressionless in a chair, as Charlotte, leaning in close, darkened her eyes with eyeliner.

"Maybe it's quite nice for her to look as though her innocence is gone," Charlotte said. "I'm trying to get a sense of where this is going."

"I thought the New Romantic was quite nice," Mert said. "I don't think we should have any rules. I don't want people to look and say, 'Remake of New Romanticism.' I think we should do this how you feel. See where your hands take you."

One of the challenges of fashion photography is the difficulty of putting into words, for the benefit of your collaborators and assistants, what you want things to look like. It isn't easy to describe makeup and hair. This is further complicated when there are two photographers. Nonetheless, Mert and Marcus are uncannily capable communicators. As a taxonomist, Mert is especially prolific: "How about something more Japanese street? And glamorize that a little? Not the thirties." "We don't want 'Galactica' or 'Star Trek.' " "I feel like the geisha was too kooky." "She looks like a granny." Occasionally, Mert gets new terminology from Marcus:

"Mert, let's spray her hair, spread it wide, make it a little bit ghoulish."

"What is 'ghoulish'?"

"Like a ghost."

"Oooh!"

Mert and Marcus met eight years ago, during a party on a pier in Hastings, when, as Mert remembers it, "Marcus came toward me and said, 'Do you have a lighter?' " They soon discovered that they had a great deal in common. For example, they both loved fashion, and each was the son of a fighter pilot.

Mert's father had been in the Turkish Air Force, before retiring to open a restaurant on the Mediterranean coast. Mert's mother had been a prominent Turkish model, in the sixties. As a boy, in Ankara, Mert was a pop-culture maven who eagerly awaited the arrival, each month, of Turkish facsimiles of British and American fashion magazines. "We were so hungry," he said. "We had nothing. We were seeing it on TV. We would go to a café to watch MTV." They got "Dallas" and "The Love Boat" at home, at least. Mert liked to dress up and bleach his friends' hair. ("You knew when he was young that he was going to be something," Semra told me.) When he turned nineteen, he moved to London, in order to study English, and suddenly he was hungry no more. "I was amazed," he said. "The clubs, the shops, the galleries. I was like a chicken out of an egg."

Marcus's father served in the Royal Air Force, and then became a dealer in art and antiques. "My mum was a hairdresser," Marcus said. "I'd hang out at her salon and see looks being created. I knew straightaway that fashion was my thing." Unlike Mert, who was an only child, Marcus had four siblings. "Marcus's family is like the Waltons," Mert said. "I used to be obsessed with the Waltons. They had the geeses in the garden, and the grandma and the granddad." Marcus, who moved to London in 1992, decided fairly early that he wanted to focus on fashion photography. He learned the technical aspects as an assistant to a still-life photographer and earned a little money taking press photos for bands like Duran Duran and the Brand New Heavies.

When Mert and Marcus met, they were keen participants in the London club scene. "In the nineties, we went out a lot," Mert said. "We were party boys." The crowd, Katie Grand recalled, included "P.R. girls, shop workers, etc.—anyone who could stay out for days on end and make it into work when they had to."

At the time, Mert was working, intermittently, as a stylist. He had never even held a camera. He and Marcus

"Is it true that you were the only person at the concert who refused to 'wave your hands in the air, and wave 'em like you just don't care'?"

moved into a derelict loft in a warehouse on Old Street, in East London, and converted it into a studio, doing most of the work themselves. Mert began to learn from Marcus. Initially, they just took pictures of each other and their friends. They weren't making much money at it, though, and Marcus's parents urged their son to consider shooting weddings instead. "But, Dad," he insisted, "I want to be a fashion photographer."

Although Mert and Marcus were a couple before they were collaborators, once they got started taking pictures together they became well known enough, in a local kind of way, for people to see their names before hearing them, and thus to fall prey to predictable mispronunciations. "Everyone used to call me Murt," Mert told me, at one point. "My name is Maht."

"It's definitely not Murt," Marcus said.

"Murt."

"Then people spelled your name 'Matt.' "

"I'm not Matt, I'm Maht. Maht. *Maht*. It means honest and brave, like the man. Uh-oh, my mother wished."

Marcus smiled and said, "Shall we take another picture?"

Grand was the first to publish their work, in 1997, in the British magazine *Dazed & Confused*, where she was the fashion director. (In her recollection, Marcus was the photographer and Mert was the stylist.) Their big break came when they got a call in 1998 from *Visionaire*, a limited-edition art-and-fashion publication. At first, they thought the call was a prank. On the basis of the *Visionaire* shoot, the London fashion agent Kim Sion took them on. By 2001, they were shooting ad campaigns for Missoni and Louis Vuitton and Hugo Boss. These days, like most prominent fashion photographers, they make the bulk of their money from ad campaigns—tens of thousands of dollars a day. Editorial work hardly pays a thing, but, as an expression of aptitude and sensibility, it is what attracts the lucrative jobs. Years of unpaid labor have now yielded something like fame and fortune, though they aren't party boys anymore.

"It's not like Liberace or anything, as much as I'd wish it to be," Mert said. "This kind of thing doesn't come like a piece of cake at the table from the waitress to you. It's hard work."

The next phase, typically, is that in which other photographers are influenced. "Their work has moved the goalposts," Grand said. "Prior to Mert and Marcus, digital retouching was invariably used as a bit of a trick, to create something weird—Björk with two heads, models cut out and placed onto weird impossible backgrounds, etc. Mert and Marcus used digital technology in a different way, much more as a hand retoucher would have done—to make the girl perfect."

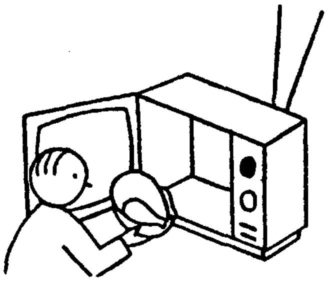
Mert and Marcus, though not exactly defensive about their reliance on Photoshop, insist that their methods fall well within the bounds of traditional photographic enhancement. "There are old techniques you could use in the darkroom, bringing things in or burning things out," Marcus said. "It takes that picture somewhere else. You become like a painter."

"People used to spray-paint their pictures," Mert said.

"A friend of mine had old photos that weren't fixed properly, and the photos faded, leaving lines of ink where the eyebrows used to be," Marcus said.

Still, for some, there is a lingering distrust of post-production augmentations. During a quiet stretch in the shoot, Guido told me, "Hopefully, they won't do too much post on the hair, do you know what I mean, for my pride." When I mentioned this to Mert and Marcus, they glanced at each other. "He said that?"

Mert and Marcus's photographs encompass a wide range of styles and influences. What they tend to have in common, besides a digitized glaze, is a fascination with a certain kind of woman. "The woman type is the common thread," Marcus told me. "A woman that's quite sexually charged, confident, not too over the top. I look for something that's slightly strange. I don't want to see a normal everyday girl in my pictures."



("Invariably, there's a Madonna reference somewhere in their photographs," Grand added. She was referring to the mother not of Jesus but of Lourdes.)

"We like powerful women, women with a meaning, a you-don't-have-to-talk-or-move-too-much-to-tell-who-you-are kind of woman," Mert said a little later. They were sitting on one of the daybeds in the pavilion, taking a break—a cigarette for Mert, an apple for Marcus. "Even if the subject is innocence, I like to see something powerful. I love Marlene Dietrich, Madonna, Faye Dunaway, Elizabeth Taylor. Ladies who dressed for a thrill. We love Charlotte Rampling."

Their Vuitton campaigns have featured some of the world's more prominent non-everyday girls, among them Jennifer Lopez, whom Mert characterized, admiringly, as "a diva with a baby's heart," and the quartet of actresses (Scarlett Johansson, Christina Ricci, Diane Kruger, Chloë Sevigny) in this fall's ads, lying languorously on couches and beds. After Ricci's Vuitton shoot was over, she stuck around and posed for a *Pop* cover, impressing Mert and Marcus with her ability to cry on command. And they impressed her with their ability to get along on the job. "Most couples can't even shop together," she told me.

Things started coming together late on the first day of the *Pop* shoot, with the sun setting off Es Vedrà. Semra was on a hot streak—Deee-Lite, Salt 'N' Pepa, Handel—Mert and Marcus passed the camera back and forth, and Lily was on the set, in pigtails, high-heeled boots, and a black taffeta Cavalli dress and cape. "Lily, it's not about modelling," Mert admonished. "It's about strange." A moment later, he had her cross her legs and pull the dress up around her waist, exposing her garter. "Oooh, I love that one," Mert said. As darkness fell, they knocked off for the day.

Dinner was a lavish buffet, as lunch had been. Mert, Marcus, Katie, and Guido took their plates into the house to talk about their plans for the next day: what to do with the models, whether or not to go on location somewhere.

"I'd like them to look like a gang," Mert said.

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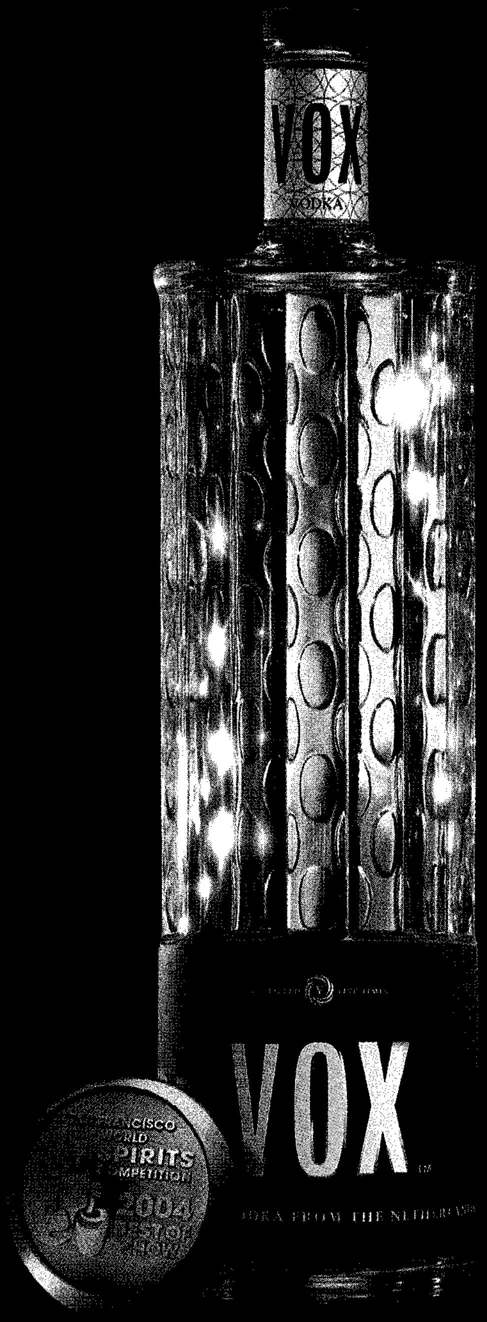
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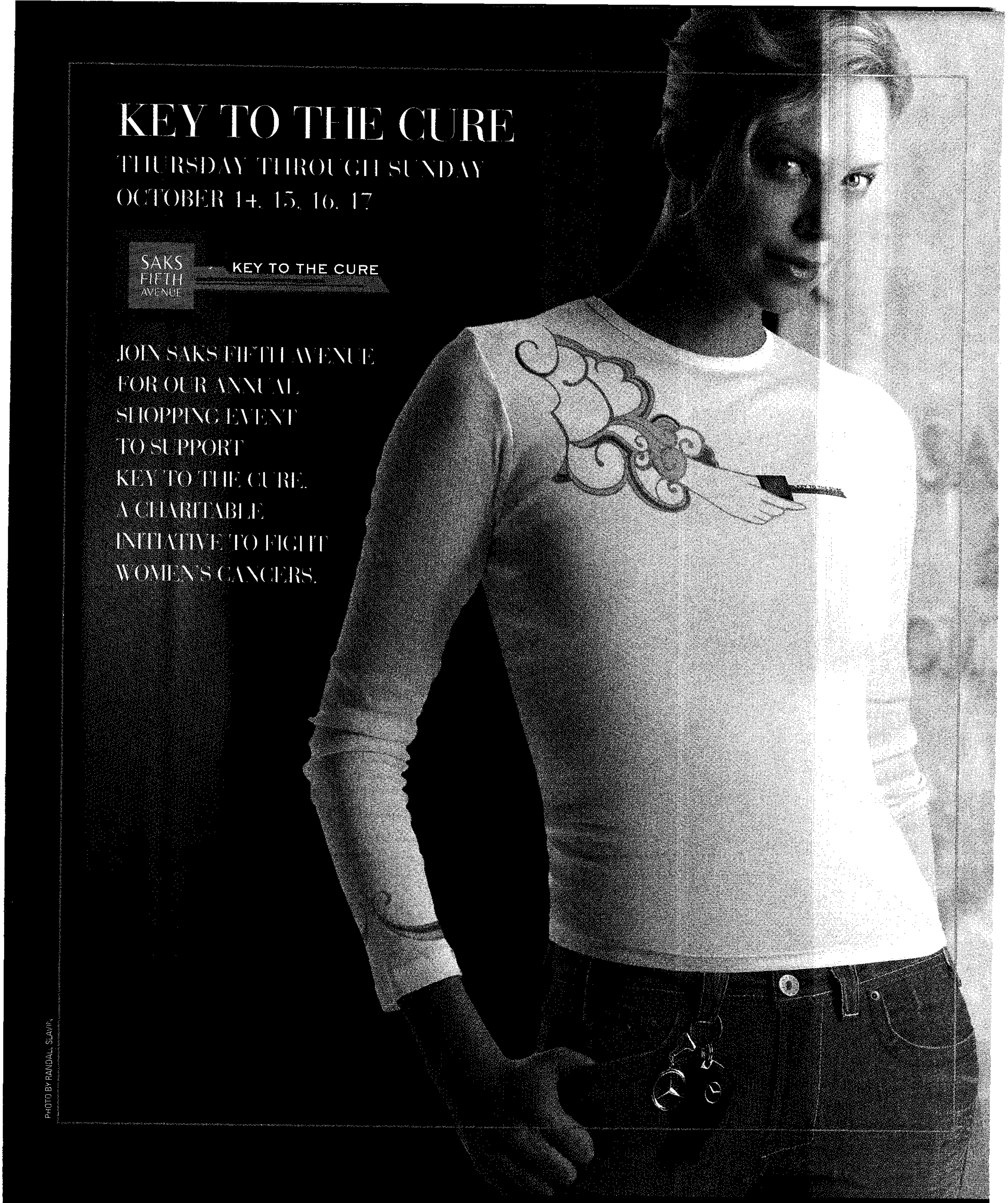

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"The boy is easy," Guido said.

"We could get a nice rowing boat," Mert suggested.

"A nice picture of four people passed out," Grand said.

"My mind is going to less makeup and more hair," Mert said.

"Is that because you don't like the makeup?" Grand asked.

"It's just too eighties," Mert said. "It's just, like, we need a little *click* moment."

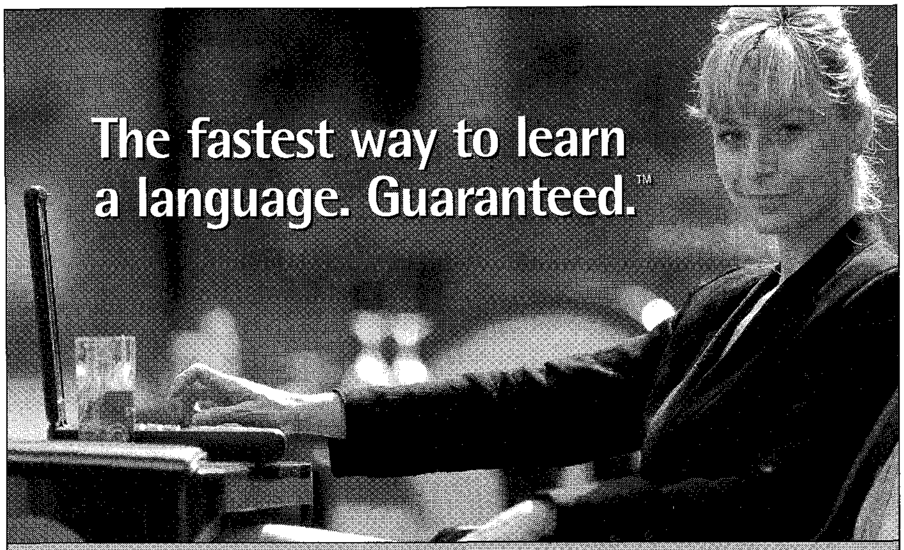
The next morning, over pancakes, the decision was made to keep shooting at the house, rather than at an abandoned soccer stadium, which might have required some trespassing. "It's all about the characters, isn't it—not just the clothes and the fashion," Marcus said. "I remember seeing Helmut Newton's pictures, at a very early age, of Grace Coddington in a pool with sunglasses on." (Coddington used to be a model.) "That image really stuck with me. Then I saw that picture again a few years ago, realizing what I do now, that we're creating these characters for the purpose of a fashion picture. You want to convince people it's a real-life scenario. That's what gives a picture longevity."

An onshore breeze had kicked up, flattening the light and imparting a hint of menace to the flanks of Es Vedrà. Semra had Santana on the iPod. At one point, a gust ripped apart the giant sheet of paper that served as a background, so that it flapped around thunderously, as assistants scrambled to furl it.

"No, leave it!" Mert exclaimed, bunching the paper up around the model's shoulders. "Gimme." He grabbed the camera from Marcus and moved in close.

Marcus stood back, eating a nectarine. "We decided that we want to see more faces," he explained. "She has something New Romantic about her, without being New Romantic in an old way."

The shoot achieved a rhythm: faces, songs, and cigarettes. "That's it!" "We're happy to move on." "A little more boob. A little less. A little less. A little more. Hands up. Evil face." "Let's play with the guy, see what we can do!" Now and then, the group gathered around the laptop. "We were thinking of turning her eyes from blue to black," said Mert, who had put on a beret and was nibbling at a bowl



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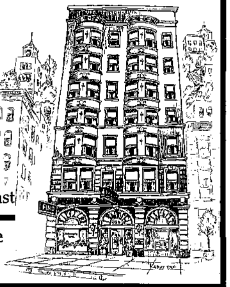
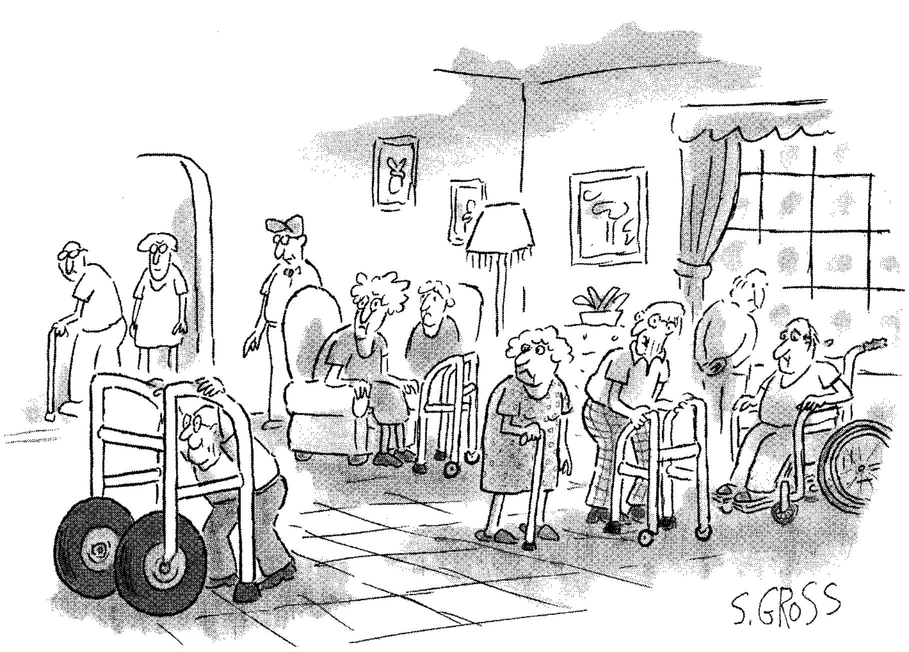




"He used to own a muscle car."

of Cheetos. "To make it New Romantic. Or like a Dutch painting."

Grand said, "She's very 'Picnic at Hanging Rock.' "

"Just don't touch the hair," Guido said, facetiously.

Twilight prompted a jump into the pool and a momentary dispersal to private quarters. The models and the crew were at the south end of the courtyard, in a two-story wing that was laid out like a motel, with its own pool, this one empty. Mert and Marcus retreated to the north end, their part of the house, a series of spare white rooms decorated with old magazines, ashtrays, and furniture that had belonged to previous tenants. When dinner was served, Mert and Marcus emerged, dressed in plush white terry-cloth robes. The mood was congenial, in a weary kind of way. Guido, Katie, Mert, and Marcus ate by candlelight and told stories about shoots gone by: snakes and lightning with Gisele in Death Valley, fart-machine pranks with Naomi in Dubai. Somehow, the conversation veered off into current events, to everyone's whereabouts on September 11th—a few had been in New York for Fashion Week—and then to the situation in Iraq. "They released those pictures from that prison?" Mert asked, referring to Abu Ghraib. "Weren't some of them fake or something?"

The table did not linger long on this particular subject. "O.K., enough about that," someone said, after an uncomfortable silence. "Let's talk about Versace."

The shoot wrapped the next evening at seven-fifteen, to the strains of Peaches' "Set It Off." Everyone applauded, then immediately began packing up. The day had been a great success, but there was little time to dwell on it. Instead, Mert and Marcus sat down at a table off the courtyard to edit the previous shoot, a twenty-two-page spread for the August issue of *W*, which they'd photographed at the house two weeks earlier. It featured the model Guinevere van Seenus posing around the house and by the pool, in black-and-white pictures that were evocative of thirties Hollywood pinups and the work of Jean Cocteau and Herb Ritts. The task was to sort through the pictures on a laptop and cull the ones that they wanted *W* to use. Mert manipulated the cursor with a pen on a digital tablet, opening picture after picture on the screen, as Marcus looked on. They referred to each image of Guinevere as though it were a different woman.

"Keep?"

"Keep."

"Get rid of?"

"Keep."

"Get rid of."

"Keep—for the moment."

"Get rid of."

"Oh, I love her."

"I like her, too."

"She's cute."

"Yeah, I like her."

"A bit Man Ray."

"A bit too Breathless Mahoney."

"She's quite nice without the jewels."

"Keep her."

"Get rid of her."

"I quite like her. It feels like reportage."

"It's a fine line between Jean Harlow and Cyndi Lauper. We don't want it to be too eighties."

"Get rid of."

"Too seedy."

"Woop—as we're talking about seedy."

"Heavy bum."

"I like her."

"I find her a bit horsey."

Mert began retouching a photograph onscreen of Guinevere gripping a bougainvillea vine, elbows shielding bare breasts. "What I'm seeing, Marcus: she could get less dark under the eyes. We get rid of her wig lines." He added highlights to the lower lip and rubbed away shadow from beneath the eyes.

"Shall we lighten her skin, make it more alabaster?" Marcus asked.

Mert tilted his head appraisingly. "She looks good, doesn't she? She looks like a strange Hollywood star. Like Hedy Lamarr or something."

"We wanted to go back in time," Marcus explained. "A twisted thirties Hollywood character—Hollywood photography combined with twenties gentlemen's photography, with a bit of naughtiness to it." He watched Mert play. "Shall we move on?"

"The eyes look a little mean."

"Get rid of?"

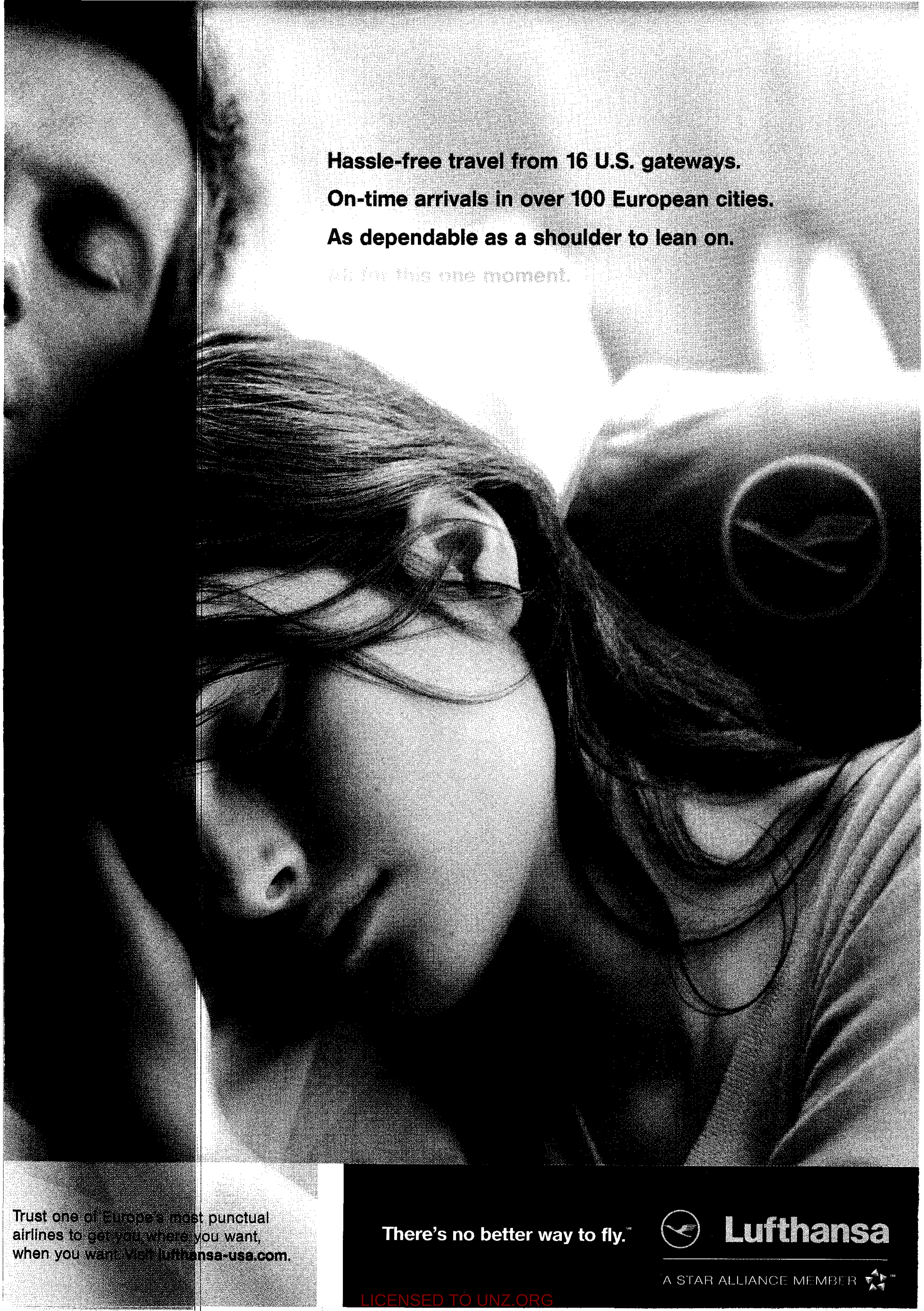
"Get rid of."

"Keep her for now."

"I don't like her. I find her quite round."

"Woop, now she's got black hair."

They came upon a photograph of Guinevere in which, by some trick of the light or the angle, one of her breasts appeared to be hanging lower than the other. "Should we lose the boobs?" Mert said. "I think we have to change the boobs, unfortunately." ♦



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HOOKED

BY IAN FRAZIER

> President Bush conceded yesterday that even many of his friends have doubts about America's role in Iraq. . . . "There's a lot of my friends who come and bass fish with me. They don't say it out loud, I know they're thinking it: 'Why?' " Bush said.
>
> —*The News.*

George Gilder, tournament economist and senior bass analyst, Discovery Institute: "G-Dub and I had just put the boat in the water at Lake Claiborne and burned some gas over to a productive little piece of bottom structure that I know about. I was chunking a crankbait made from pork rind cured in a special bass attractant I'd got from Milt Friedman—real fragrant stuff, part pure market forces, part liquefied offal. My eyes were watering from the fumes, and I was working that rind along a submerged tire reef, and suddenly a shapeless, interrogatory-type word began to form in my brain. At the time, I couldn't have told you exactly what the word was, but of course the President is right. The man can read minds."

Henry McKinnell, Jr., chairman and C.E.O. of Pfizer, Inc., a.k.a. "The Fishin' Magician": "When I bass fish with President Bush, I don't care how many I catch, because it's fun just to be out. The other day, though, on Lake Privacy, I was reclining on the casting deck, taking in some sun and sprinkling powdered fish-stunner over the side when—I don't know how to put this, but I started to have an urge to say a . . . what's that thing? When you don't know something, and want to find out? Question. But then I decided to forget about it. I didn't want to spoil the atmosphere. Also, bass are very sensitive to sound."

Tony (Bassmaster) Blair, foreign official: "Spot on, Mr. President! You have isolated the crux of the biscuit, as we say, and hit upon the very word I was thinking. I remember you and I were on a great impoundment lake in Texas or Delaware or somewhere, and I was trying to impale this great moist wriggling worm on this great hook, and the Secret Service people were rocketing past on Jet Skis, and the boat was heaving, and the infernal American sun was beating down, and just for a moment I looked to Heaven and thought, Oh, bloody (that word)?!"

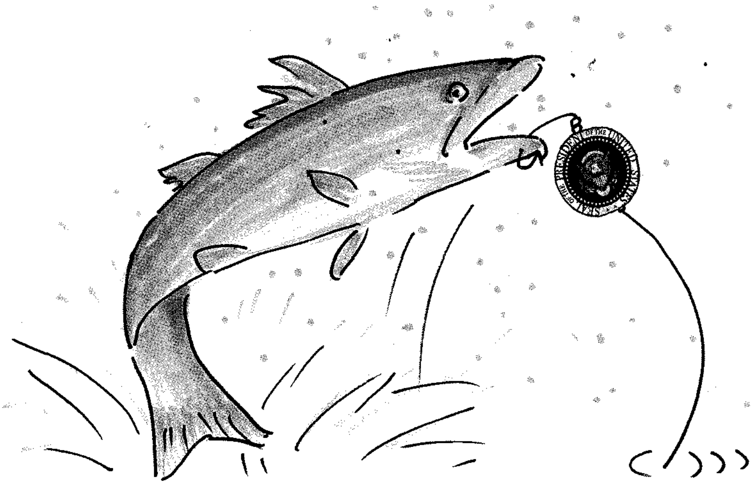
Georgette Mosbacher, cosmetics tycoon, author of "A Lady's Guide to Largemouths": "When my third husband, Bob, and the President and I cruise the swamps and bayous for lunkers, we're very relaxed and informal. Every fish is eaten raw as soon as it's caught, without the bother of place settings or finger bowls. One afternoon, I had just snatched a tasty-looking one from the live well when the President's eye met mine. O.K., yes, I admit—for the fleetingest of small seconds, that particular question had very briefly crossed my mind. But in another second, thankfully, it was gone. By then the President, with Lincolnesque tact, had turned away."

Sanford Weill, chairman of Citigroup, Inc., owner of Sandy's Bass Hatchery: "I believe I know the incident the President is referring to. We were fishing from my boat, the Marie-Josée Kravis, on a lake, pond, or other body of water left off maps for reasons of security. The evening was calm, and I recall the lures arcing through the twilight and the small splashes making ripples that widened to the shore. At a certain point, I became aware that the President sensed I was thinking something; with old fishing buddies, you don't have to talk. He is mistaken, however, about what I thought. True, I did think some of it, but not the whole word. So as not to aid our enemies, I mentally stopped at 'Wh—?' "

Richard Mellon Scaife, bass fanatic, currently unemployed: "Just the President and I, sprawled in deck chairs on the stern of a factory ship trawling bank to bank up the Mississippi on a lazy afternoon, bass flopping all around us as plentiful as a fisherman could desire; and the President suddenly leans over and lifts my hat and stares into my face and says, 'You got anything you want to say, Ricky?' What could I do? He had seen into my soul! Recovering quickly, I blushed crimson and replied, 'Well, Mr. President, now that you mention it . . . jeez, no.' "

General Colin Powell, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Bass: "Your bass is an elusive *why* creature who hunts by *why* night, and if we wish to *why* outwit him we must adapt our *how come* methods, first and foremost by *why* thinking like a *what for* bass *why*, acquainting ourselves with his *why* haunts, the lily pad *whatever for* or submerged cypress stump *why*, where he waits for his incautious *why oh why* prey, and where we may ease up on him *why in the world* and by properly presenting our *what possessed you* plug, spinner, or *in heaven's name why* minnow entice him to *why why why why why why why why why why why why why why why why* bite.

"In all tips and lore about bass fishing, I completely agree with the President." ◆



MICHAEL CRAWFORD

AUDUBON
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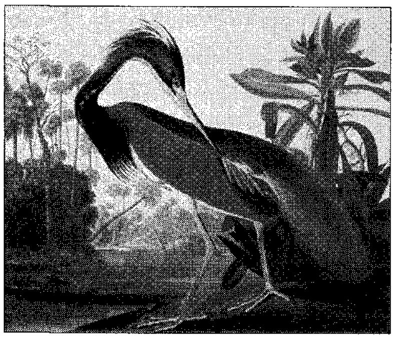

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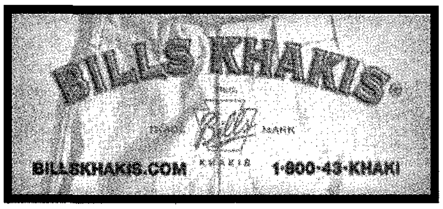

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FASHION CAFETERIA

Where everyone goes in Paris after the shows are over.

BY MICHAEL SPECTER

One evening not long ago, I wandered down the Rue de Richelieu on my way to a Chinese restaurant called Davé, which is recommended regularly by people in the fashion business. Like many popular restaurants in Paris, reservations are hard to get at Davé. So I wasn't surprised to find a *Complet* sign hanging over the lacquered red door. Inside, though, the place was practically empty—there was just one couple, sitting at a table near the window. A rumpled, unshaven Chinese man of indeterminate age emerged from the kitchen. He had wild black hair flecked with gray and was wearing an untucked pink cotton pin-striped shirt, a gray sweater-vest, seersucker pants, and lime-green silk slippers. This was the owner, Davé Cheung—but nobody uses his last name. He led me to a banquette and poured tea, and I asked him why he'd placed a "Sold out" sign on the door on a night when there were thirty empty tables.

"Are you kidding? Do you know what would happen if I took that sign off the door?"

"People might come in to have dinner?"

"Exactly! They would just walk right in. I would have to let anybody who wanted come and eat here. I would have no control. No control over my own restaurant!"

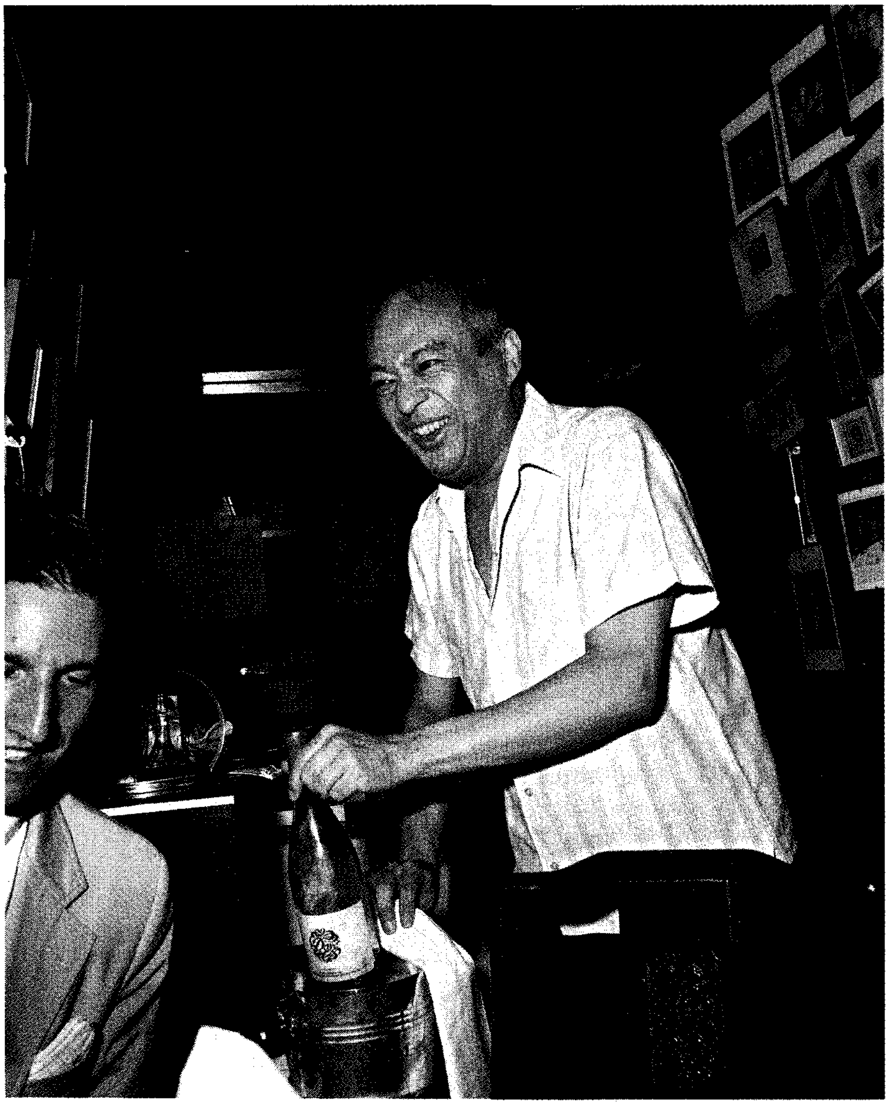
There are more than fifteen hundred Chinese restaurants in Paris—among them Cantonese, Szechuan, and Hunan. As a culinary experience, Davé ranks somewhere in the top half. Nobody recommends Davé for the food, however, which is adequate, or the prices, which, while always high, vary according to what the owner feels like serving. Or for the ambience. Davé is dark and claustrophobic even on the brightest day—hemmed in by quilted red walls and a velvet curtain inside the door. A tropical-fish tank, which sits in the middle of the front room, provides the only real source of light. Despite all that, Davé may be the most frequently and reverentially mentioned Chinese restaurant in France. It's certainly the most exclusive. Except on weekends, when he does not serve lunch, the place is open every day. Davé seats about eighty people, and on a busy night during fashion week it might serve a hundred dinners—much of them tofu and bok choy—at an average price of around sixty euros a person.

"I know you are saying to yourself, 'This is a restaurant in Paris, of all places—why would somebody go there if the food was not spectacular?' " Davé said. He threw up his hands. "It's simple. People don't come here for the food. They come for me. I offer my guests peace. They are tired and hassled and bothered, and this is where they can relax at the end of the day and be with each other socially. They don't want to be disturbed by a bunch of tourists." The word seemed to twist his face into a moue of distaste. "My job is to make fabulous people feel fabulous. I mean, really, anybody can serve a spring roll."

Davé is a restaurant that caters to writers, actors, filmmakers, and rock stars. Allen Ginsberg would wander in when he was in Paris, choose a quiet corner table, ask for a bowl of wonton soup, and read in the dark. ("I always worried he would hurt his eyes," Davé said. "We don't have that much reading here.") Bernardo Bertolucci has eaten at Davé, and so have Oliver Stone and David Bowie. Davé is always happy to see them, but when he talks about fabulous people he really means fabulous *fashion* people, because for much of his life fashion is all he has cared about. "At some point when I was younger, I became obsessed with fashion, with the drama of it—the look," he said. "In school, I would go through *Vogue* and *Elle* and I always wondered who was behind it and how did it work. Who was making these women look the ways they did?" He says that he never tired of watching the transformation of image to reality. "That is what fashion really does. It's one of the great challenges of our modern life: it makes fake things real."

Davé makes fake things real, too. The restaurant functions as a sort of high-school cafeteria for the nomadic denizens of the fashion world, who traipse constantly between New York, Paris, and Milan. And, just as in high school, the food at Davé never matters nearly as much as the seating arrangements. People go there to assure themselves of their stature in a world where little else matters. Some of the most famous editors in the fashion business have stormed out of shows that they are paid to attend when they find, to their shame, that they have been assigned a seat in the second row. Ask why it matters and most will tell you that it is impossible to see the shoes from the second or—God forbid—the third row. In fact, what is impossible for them is to be seen as people who are not important enough to sit where they want to sit.

"Look, it's that new girl from Chanel," a Davé regular said one evening as she sat down to a meal of broccolini, tofu, and tea. "Let's see what he does with her." A tiny blond woman, dressed mostly in feathers and diamonds, and wearing cowboy boots, stood warily at the entrance. Diners openly stared as Davé moved, deliberately, toward the door. Where would he seat this woman? Certainly not in one of the alcoves at the front of the restaurant. Perhaps he would put her in the back room—a decision that would make the regular patrons feel better about themselves and confirm their suspicions that she was nobody. Davé seemed unsure at first, too, but in the French fashion world you don't mistreat the people associated with Chanel, so he gave her a table near the entrance. The young woman sat down and placed a napkin across her miniskirt. "*J'aime bien*," she said. "*J'aime bien. J'aime bien.*" The room returned to its food.



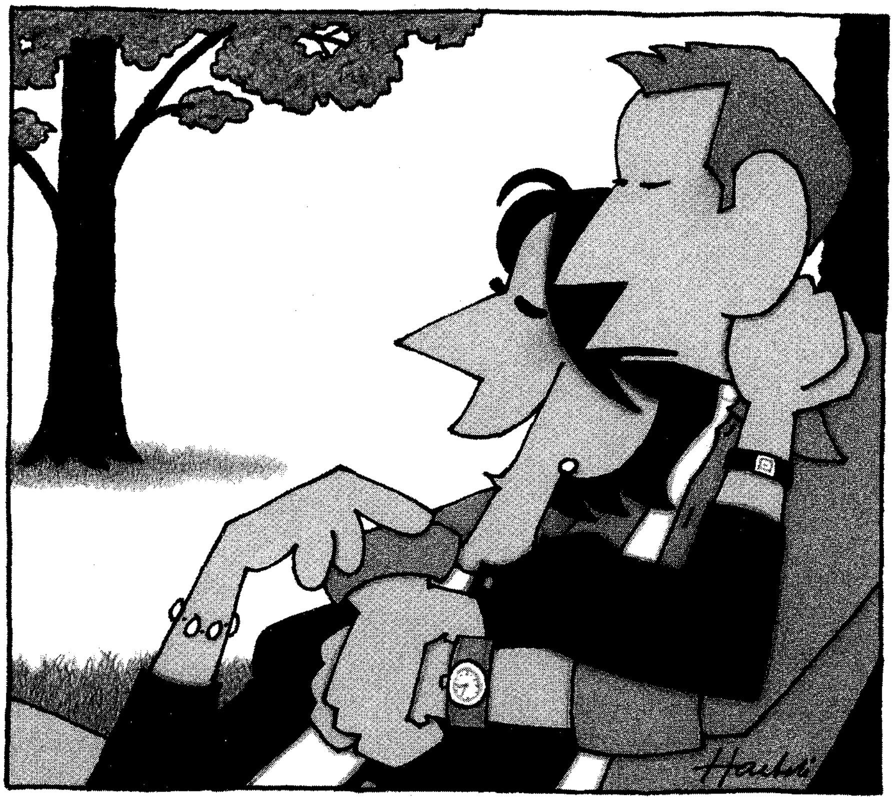
Davé, the Paris fashion world's unlikely arbiter. Photograph by Michael Roberts.

Later that evening, Davé faced a more complicated seating problem: a grand and difficult woman. Again, the room looked up. Loulou de la Falaise was the archetypal muse—the central inspiration for Yves Saint Laurent during his most creative years. Now in her late fifties, she owns a shop on the Rue de Bourgogne and still makes a regal entrance wherever she goes, and she goes everywhere. As we all watched, Davé led her to an inferior table. The crowd seemed pleased. "Loulou is always like a little girl," he told me later. "She is very, very childish and very grand. Nobody can look at anybody else when she is in the room or she begins to pout." He waved his arm in the air dismissively. "They say she is chic."

There could be few greater humiliations than to be exiled behind the wall separating the front room and the back room, past the fish tank and nearly into the kitchen. Some of the most powerful people in the fashion business treat Davé with a deference that they withhold from nearly everyone except those who can provide them with a good table. "There are some bitchy people in the fashion world," the designer Marc Jacobs told me one night. "But nobody is stupid enough to offend Davé."

During fashion weeks, the battle for a table can become even more absurd. "Leo and Gisele had to stand in the street for twenty minutes a while ago," Davé told me, with a mischievous grin. He was referring to the actor Leonardo DiCaprio and the model Gisele Bündchen. "Can you imagine that? Leo had come to introduce Gisele to *moi*, and he was not happy at all. But what was I supposed to do—tell my beloved friend Helmut Newton to get up and leave? Or should I have gotten rid of John Galliano? Gisele was really cute about it. But Leo was annoyed. And, you know, I owe a lot to Leo, because without him Tobey"—DiCaprio's buddy Tobey Maguire—"would never have come in. And now he is here all the time."

Davé was born in Hong Kong in 1953. His family was from a province in northern China, but when he was a teen-ager his parents moved to Paris. The family settled in an outlying neighborhood, and it didn't take him long to realize that his ambitions were larger than



"If you could time-travel back to any period in history, would your love for me keep you from going?"

• •

the few blocks in which he lived his life. Yet his father had a restaurant, and he and his brothers and sisters were expected to work in it. That was what the Cheung family did. "I understood right from the start that I was more a Westerner than an Oriental," he said. "When I was young, in my teens, I went to see an astrologer who was known to be the best in Paris. He looked at my charts and he said very simply, 'You belong in the West. The East is no good for you; nothing will work there.' And he was right. I am a very Western person.

"I was pushed, I think, by the usual fear of the immigrant," he continued. "So I worked all the time. And I still do. I don't take holidays and I don't go away for the weekend. I am here. Every day. Always." Late in the afternoon, he can often be found napping in his favorite banquette. He does have an apartment, just a few blocks from the restaurant, but he is rarely there for long. "When I go home, I am tired. I watch a movie or sleep. Watching DVDs is what I do for exercise. I used to read more, but I'm getting too old and tired to concentrate. In the past, I tried to watch mostly intellectual films. Now I prefer action. But mostly I am here, and my customers like that. They know I am not going to be in New York or on the Riviera when they call. These are people who like certainty."

Davé opened his restaurant in the summer of 1982, and two decades later he moved it to the current location, not far from the Comédie Française. "There is such a thing as luck in this world," he told me. The old restaurant was near the Jardin des Tuileries, where all the fashion shows were held. Helmut Newton came in, and so did Grace Coddington, the creative director of *Vogue*. "Everything followed from that. They came back with their friends. Then the rock people came; Duran Duran was there every day. And Azzedine, Yohji, and Rei"—the designers Azzedine Alaïa, Yohji Yamamoto, and Rei Kawakubo. "People started to have parties. It just went from there."

Polaroids of notable customers, and, in the case of Newton, Keith Haring, and a few others, pictures and drawings by notable customers, line Davé's walls. Davé will give a tour of those pictures with anyone who asks. "There is Naomi," he said. "And, look, it's Caroline, Karl, Keanu, and Kevin!" he shouted, giddy with delight. "There is Leo and *moi*," he said, pointing to a black-and-white photograph of a young DiCaprio. "And there is Leo in the 'Titanic' phase. And there he is when he was making 'The Beach.' " DiCaprio leads to Tobey Maguire, who leads to Gwyneth Paltrow. "She has come since she was a girl. Then me." After that, it's on to a self-portrait by Sting and then another of Maguire, with Davé next to him; then a photograph of Davé with Francis Ford Coppola. ("God, that guy loves to eat.") "Then another of Naomi and me. There is Tobey again"—as always, with Davé by his side. Davé speaks French, English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, and he uses the first person extensively in all of them.

"Look, it's Tom," he said, pointing to a picture of Tom Ford that was taken not long before he resigned, in April, as chief designer for Gucci—an event treated by some of Davé's customers at least as seriously as the war with Iraq. In the picture, Ford is dressed in a white turtleneck and a white velvet jacket with huge lapels, and he is wearing aviator glasses. Ford had attended a party in the restaurant the night before, and Davé was smiling broadly. "He was *wild* last night. I can say no more. Wild, do you understand me?" I tried to wrest some details from him. "*Non, non, non*. I can say no more." He concluded, "But, when Tom loses it, it is lost."

Davé tries to be discreet, but his opinions often overcome the effort. "Puffy is *so* insecure," he told me once. "I swear to God, he had his people calling me for a table ten times a day. I would say, 'Sure,' and they would call back an hour later to see if everything was still O.K."

"Stella," he said one day, referring to the designer Stella McCartney, "she is charming. She is cool. Maybe her clothes don't have a very strong image—maybe she wouldn't have the job she has if her last name was something else. . . but who am I to say?" I attended a Helmut Lang show last year with Davé. He and Lang are close. Still, he was not impressed. Lang sent out one of his models in a pair of pants that made him look as if he were wrapped in an Ace ban-

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dage. "This is just ridiculous," Davé said. "Ridiculous. Why would he do it? It's not clothes. It's not art, it's a joke. Designers have to be so outrageous these days that they forget to make a decent dress."

Fashion week is trying for Davé. In the midst of the women's collection last fall, I found him dressed in a shiny black Comme des Garçons outfit. He was sitting on a banquette and looking weary. He took a large leather folio from the podium near the kitchen; he uses the podium to orchestrate the restaurant's movements. The folio is his reservations roster, and for that night it was more than full. "Look," he said to me, dragging the book in front of my face. "This is a table for *Women's Wear Daily* and that is a party for French *Vogue*." Jonathan Newhouse, the chairman of Condé Nast International and a frequent visitor to the restaurant, had also reserved a table. Then, there would be a party for Douglas Lloyd, the president of a well-known advertising and design firm. "It's one of those nights when everyone plans to be here"—and by "everyone" he means people he actually wants in the restaurant. Elizabeth Saltzman Walker, a fashion director at *Vanity Fair* and a longtime Davé habitué, called to confirm the plans for the Lloyd party. "Yes, baby," Davé cooed. "Of course. Of course. I will have everything and everybody you want. Yes, come after the show. Just come when you can. I will keep everything for you." After he hung up, he looked at me and smiled. "She is very close with Tom, you know," he said. "Very close."

The phones rang every few minutes. Although Davé can be unctuous when it is required, he also enjoys the power that comes with saying no. Here is his side of a fairly typical conversation: "No. We have nothing." Pause. "No, not at any time." Pause. "We have nothing." Pause. "Not tomorrow, either." Pause. "I don't want to say yes. Of course you can call back. I don't want to say yes." Pause. "I can't encourage you." Pause. "No, we don't get many cancellations. I don't think so. No. Not really. Goodbye." He hung up. "Sometimes American visitors will call every day. And I will say, 'No,

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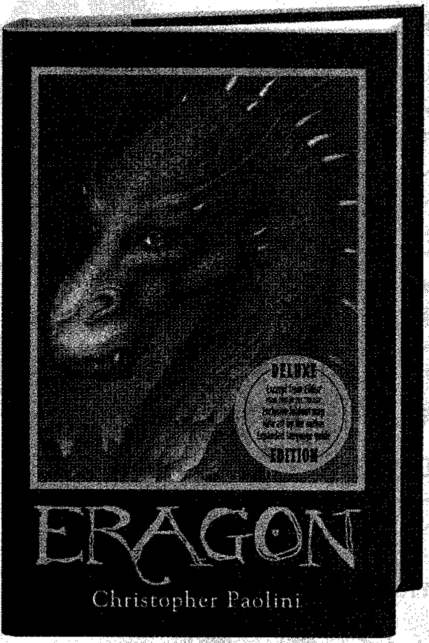

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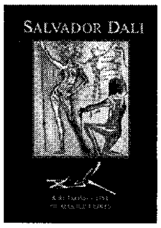

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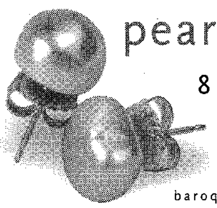

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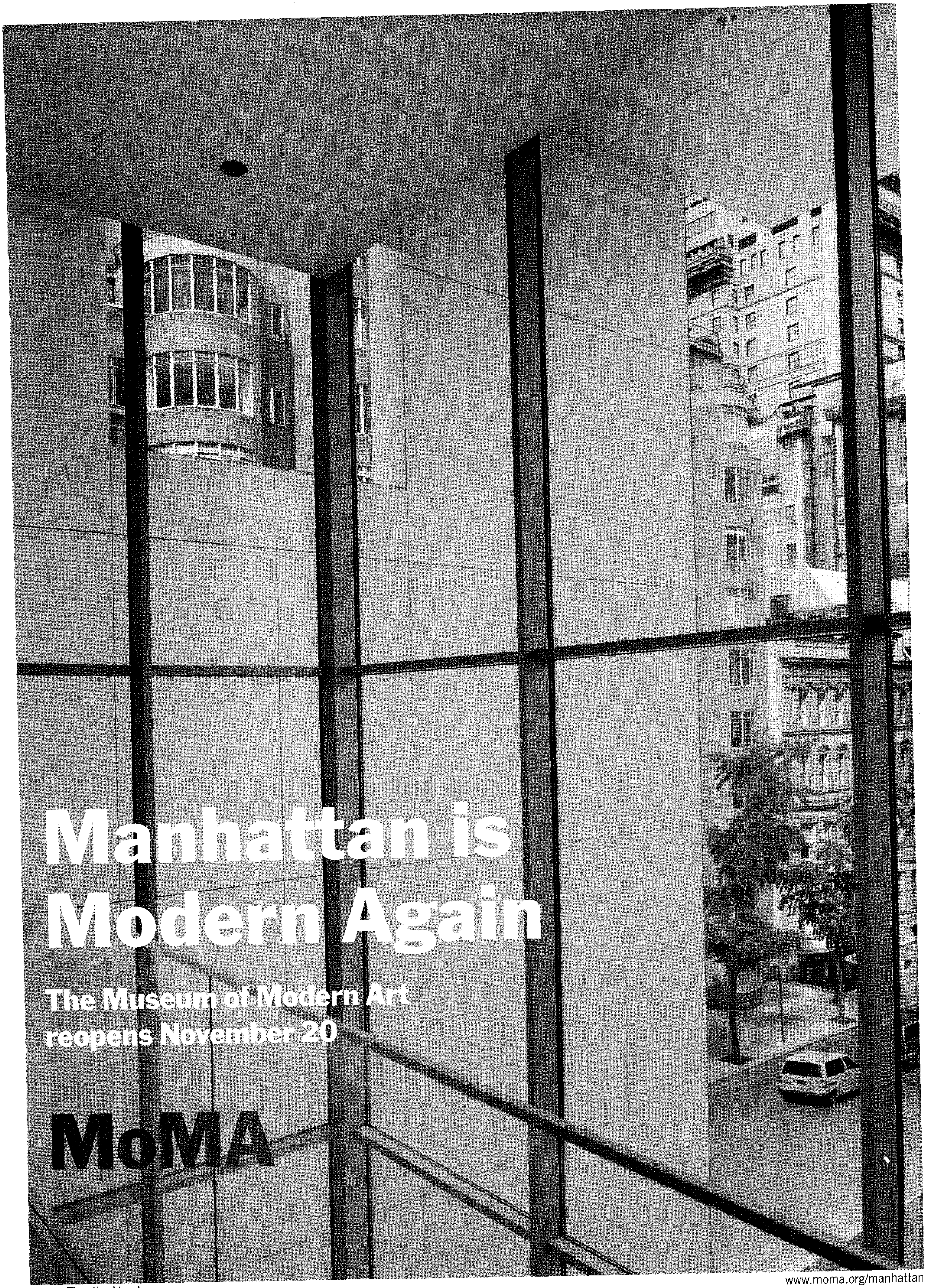
there is nothing.' And they will call back the next day and the day after that. I respect that. They are so pushy and aggressive. I can't be that way, but I respect that. It's part of what makes America so great."

Davé is his own rope line. If you dial his number, he will answer. If you want a table, you will need to get it from him. "There are some people for whom I will always have a table," he continued. "They know that. And that is the way a restaurant has to work. I answer the phone and try to be nice. I say I am sorry. I say, 'You can call back later.' But I am working sixteen hours every day and the people call several times and they will wait for the other person to answer the phone. But I am the other person. I am always the other person." People don't drift into Davé. They are either all there or all someplace else. That's because the fashion crowd moves as a highly regimented herd, bouncing constantly from shows, to the Ritz, and to a few chosen restaurants. One evening last fall, at nine-forty-five, three tables at Davé were occupied. By ten-ten, not one seat was empty. John Galliano's show, which featured models wearing what appeared to be elaborate baby-doll outfits, had ended moments earlier. "Just what we need," Carine Roitfeld, the editor of French *Vogue*, said as she entered the restaurant. "Three-thousand-dollar outfits that make us look like nineteenth-century hookers." Davé rolled his eyes and laughed. "Oh, baby, oh, baby," he said, to nobody in particular. The next person through the door, a tall blond woman, surprised Davé. "Who?" he mouthed quietly to a small group of people who had suddenly materialized behind him. "It's Amy," somebody shouted at him. "She is the queen of New York night life." Amy Sacco, who owns the clubs Bungalow 8 and Lot 61, had arrived for the Lloyd party, still jet-lagged from a flight taken the night before. You could literally hear Davé exhale with relief. He doesn't like surprises, and at least she was part of the club. Sacco took one look at the portion of spring rolls that had been deposited on the table in front of her and said, "Can you get a drink in this place?"

This is not a crowd that is famous for its gustatory instincts. "The fashion people eat mostly vegetables these days," Davé said. "When they eat. Besides bok choy, it's broccoli. Steamed vegetables and tofu. They're so afraid of carbohydrates. Deathly afraid." And what about rice, the staple of Chinese food nearly everywhere? "My God," he laughed. "They act like it's poison." Many Paris chefs rise at dawn to scour the markets for the freshest ingredients. Davé does not. He closes his restaurant each night around one. Most mornings, by the time he gets out of bed, all the best vegetables have long been sold to other customers. He doesn't need to hunt for them anyway, because Davé pays a service to buy food for him. The food is delivered two or three times a week. His kitchen is basic and minimally staffed. Davé doesn't believe in menus, and few of his regular customers have ever consulted one. "I have been going there for thirty years and I never even knew he had a menu," Grace Coddington, one of the people who, by their constant presence, helped insure his success, said. "He just knows what I want to eat, and if I want something different I tell him." Davé confers with his diners when they arrive, and if they have a request he will honor it. Usually, he just says, "Let me bring you something good"—lemon chicken, for example, or bok choy, and usually spring rolls and spareribs, too. "They don't want to decide. They make general comments, suggestions," he said. I asked about his anti-menu stance. "Too much stress," he said. "That is why I don't use them. We don't talk about bills, either. It's rude. Just come and sit with your friends and I will bring you food. And drink. Put the cost out of your mind for five minutes"—which is not hard, since so few of his customers actually pay for meals with their own money. A typical meal for two, with a bottle of wine, can cost a hundred and fifty dollars. "Basically, the people don't care. Nobody comes here and complains about the prices. I charge depending upon the food and what people are drinking, of course. People don't need to look at a piece of paper to decide what to eat. They have confidence in me." One afternoon, I noticed two women sitting at a table, each looking at something smooth and long and gold with red lettering. I approached their table and there were two menus, each written in French, English, and Chinese. Davé came to greet me, and I asked him why, after telling me how little regard he had for menus, those women had got them. He stared back at me and laughed. "But they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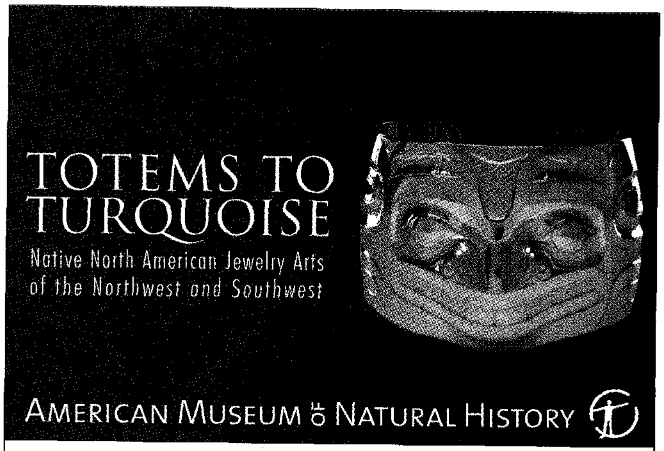

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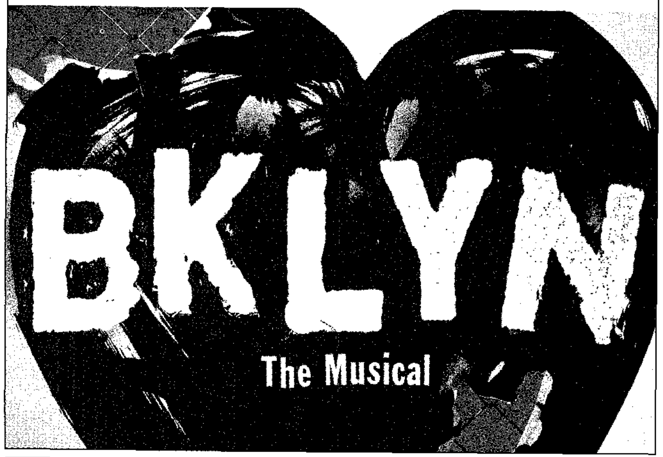

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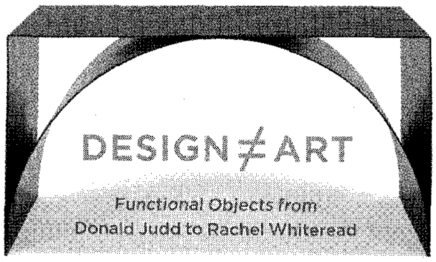

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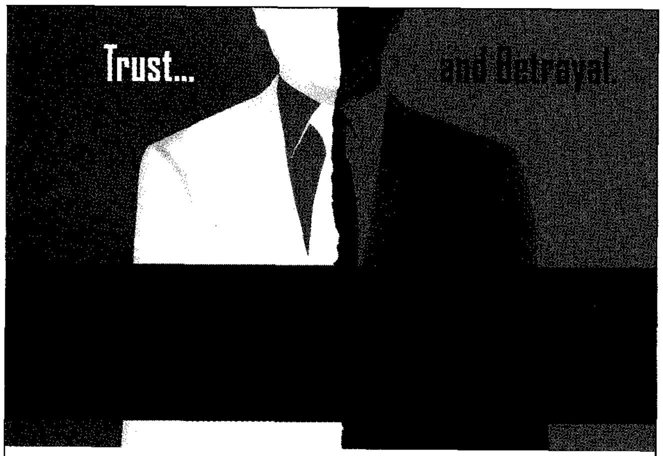

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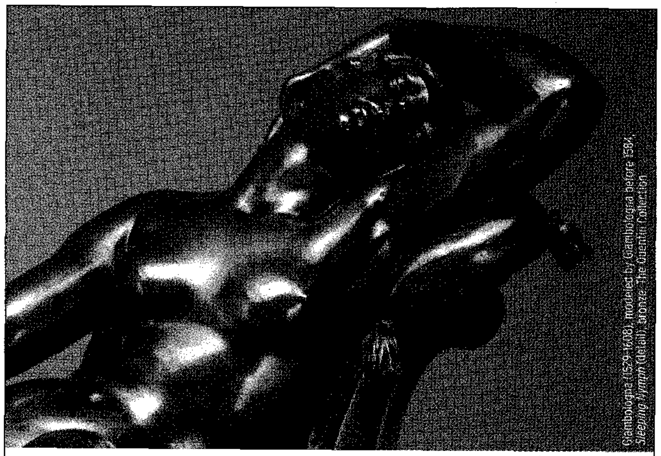
Giambologna (1529-1608), modeled by Giambologna before 1584, *Sleeping Nymph* (detail), bronze. The Quentin Collection

THE FRICK COLLECTION

"European Bronzes from The Quentin Collection" (September 28–January 2) is the first public exhibition of a private collection devoted to the art of the statuette from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Featured are works by Giambologna, Susini, de Keyser, Prieur, and others. **The Frick Collection, 1 East 70th Street, 212-288-0700** or **frick.org**

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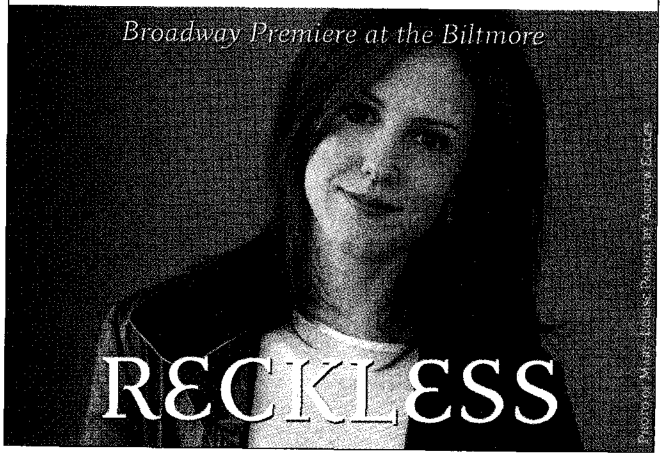
Broadway Premiere at the Biltmore
RECKLESS
Photo of Mary-Louise Parker by Andrew Eccles

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THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

"Calder Miró" (October 9, 2004–January 23, 2005) explores the visual dialogue between these masters of modern art in 104 paintings, sculptures and assemblages, many on view and paired for the first time ever. **The Phillips Collection, 1600 21st Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 202-387-2151** or **phillipscollection.org**

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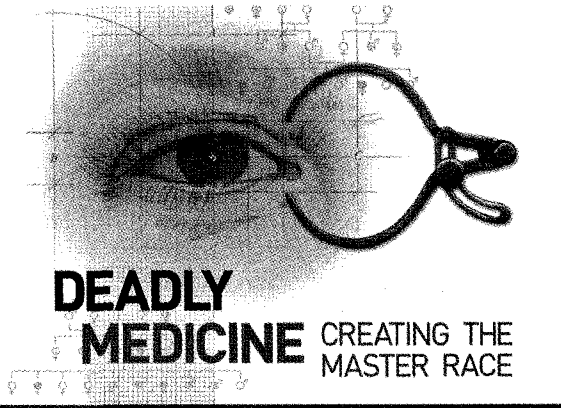

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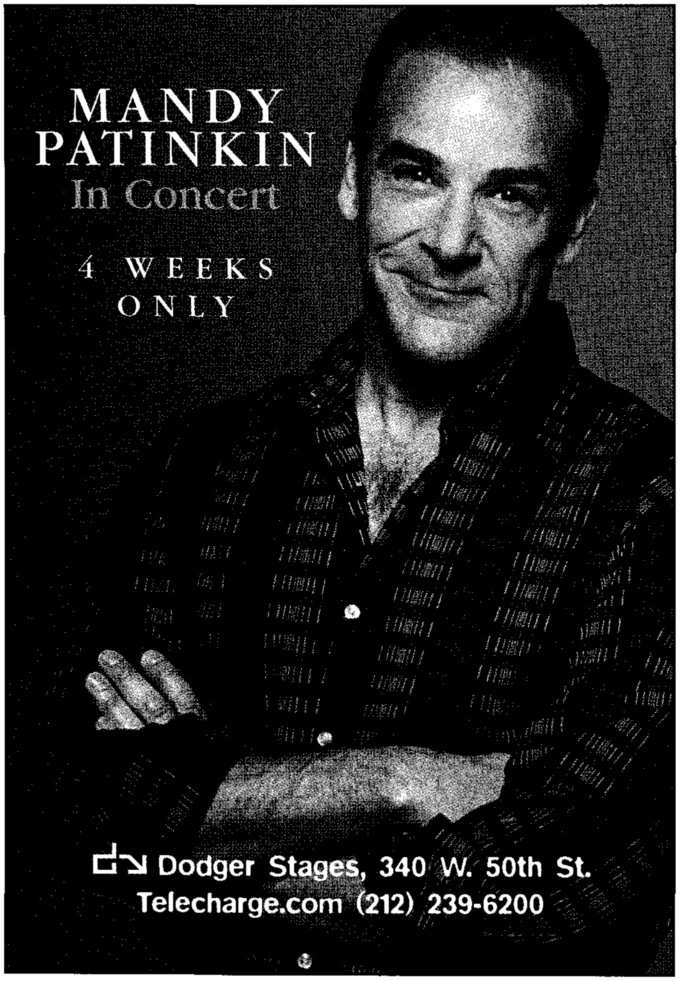

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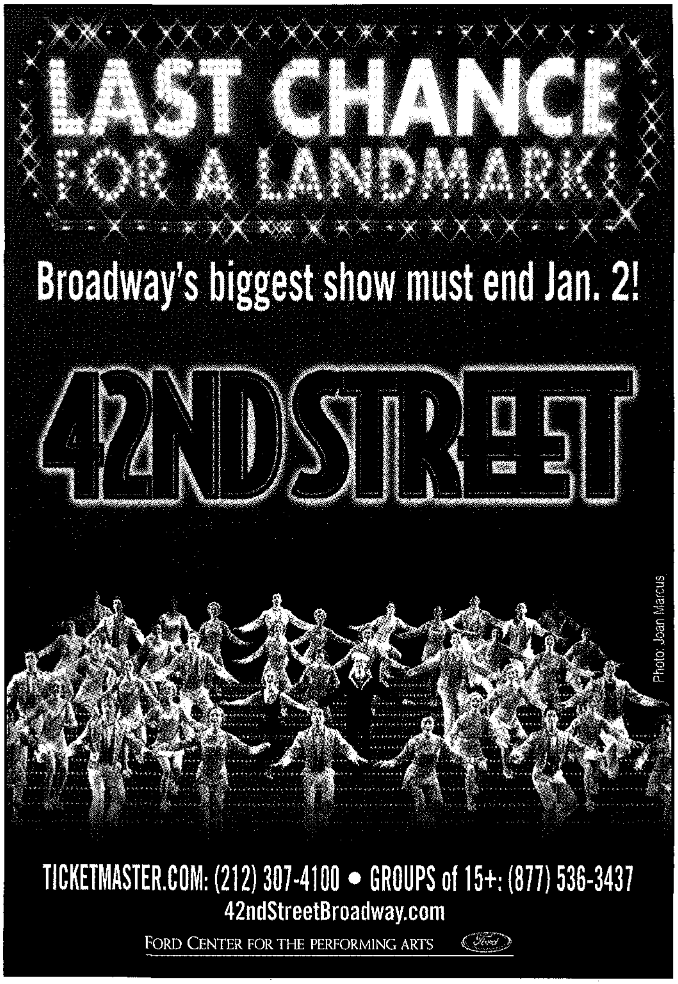

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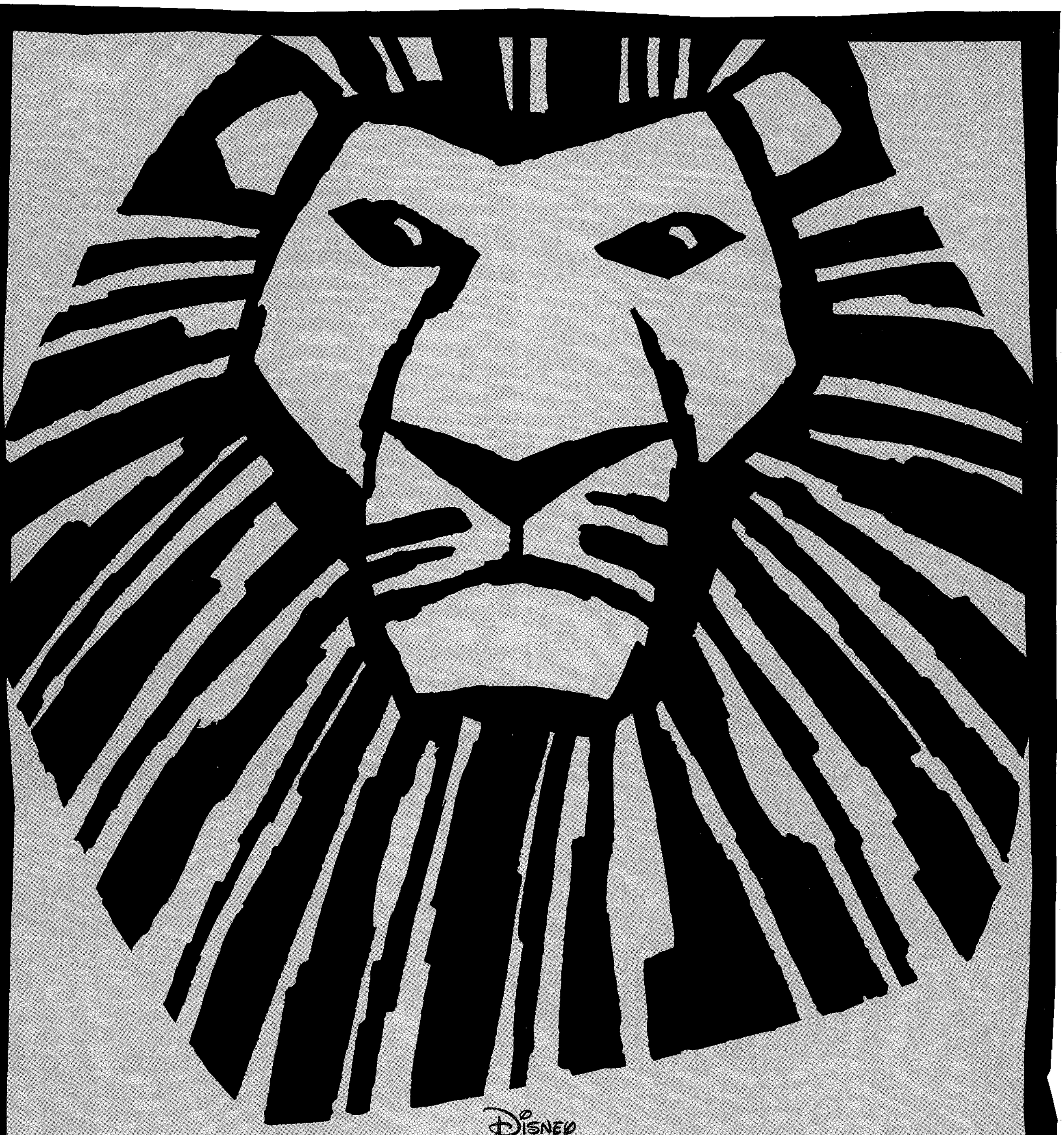

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NIGHTGOWN

To be inhabited.
To float from room
to room raving, waving my arms.
To be tossed by unfamiliar dreams,
and then to lie limp and slack on the bed.
To be folded, without a thought,
and put away in a dark drawer.
Or to hang in a closet, shapeless as a sack,
knowing the terror of form dissolving into formlessness.

Someone is inside me.
Someone is continually dreaming
dreams not my own
so that I am pulled this way and that!

I have always been attracted to the moon.
To a place where I shiver but do not freeze.
And although I, unlike you, must make do
without head or heart, I can imagine a future
you cannot: where, filled with a wild winter emptiness,
I fly over a streaming patchwork countryside
to see what has so far eluded me:
the white world written on with white writing!

—*Elizabeth Spires*

are *nobodies*," he said. "How could I possibly know what they want to eat?"

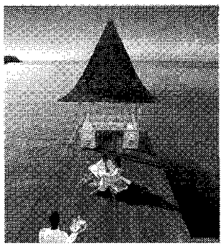
In January, the photographer Helmut Newton died, at the age of eighty-three, in Los Angeles. His widow, June, and Anna Wintour, the editor of *Vogue*, decided to hold a memorial service during the couture shows at the beginning of July in Paris. The service took place at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal, just around the corner from Davé. Karl Lagerfeld, dressed in knee-high crocodile boots and a leather choker, was one of the principal speakers. So was Tom Ford. Manolo Blahnik, Anouk Aimée, Charlotte Rampling, and Mario Testino were there. Jane Birkin, Josephine Hart, Stella McCartney, and Newton's friend Bobby Short all flew in to attend. Afterward, eighty people were invited for spring rolls, spareribs, and lemon chicken at Davé. "My God, it's a fashion restaurant!" Blahnik screamed in mock horror as he stepped inside. "Can you imagine anything more ridiculous than the concept of a fashion restaurant?"

Davé was genuinely upset by Newton's death—they were particularly close. "We spent last Christmas together," he said. "June, Helmut, and me. Just the three of us. In the restaurant. I feel so sad. Helmut was a wonderful person, and he did what he did alone. There was no ego about him. No entourage. No staff. He just loved to take pictures. All that has changed now. I saw it change before my eyes. When I started, fashion was more for an élite. Now, with the media the way they are, it is seen every day. The shows are broadcast live all around the world to billions of people. It's marketing. Business. Money. They are selling celebrity."

Slowly, the guests filed in: Ford, Donald Trump's fiancée, Melania Knauss (who was in town to hunt for a couture wedding dress), Pierre Bergé, for many years Yves Saint Laurent's right-hand man. They all nodded to Davé, whose eyes were brimming with tears. As people found the seats assigned to them, the telephone rang at the podium from which Davé directs his daily traffic.

"Yes," he said. "No. I can't. Not tonight. We are closed.

"Well, no," he continued. "I can't promise tomorrow, either. No. We are very busy. It's the fashion time, and we really don't have room for other people." ♦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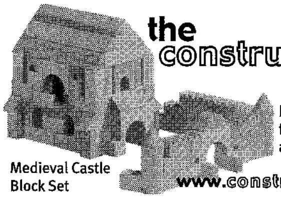
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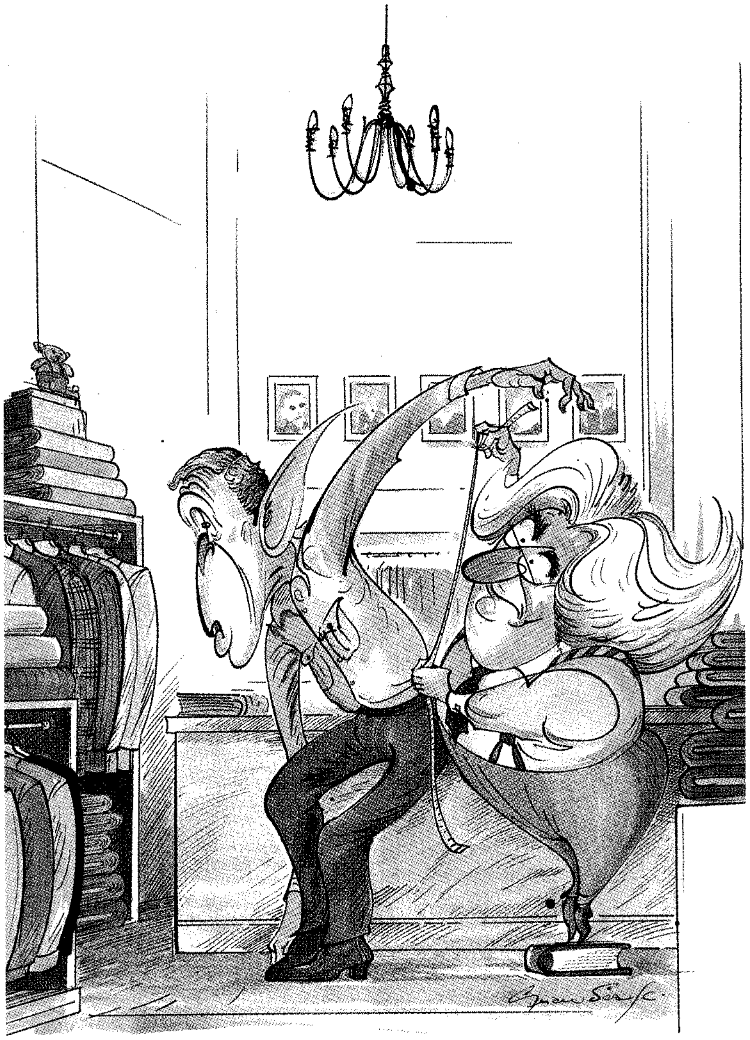
ANNALS OF FASHION

FIT FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

What Georges de Paris does for a President.

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

Georges de Paris, tailor to every American President since Lyndon Johnson, dresses beautifully at all times. He nearly always wears a suit, regardless of errand or weather. He has never owned a pair of jeans or khakis; his most casual look is a blazer worn with wool trousers and an ascot, and all his winter suits are three-piece. He wears his trousers high, on what was once his waist, rejecting the style of so many men of substantial middle sections who wear their pants below the belly and look, he says, like pregnant women. He never wears shirts with button-down collars (they are for sports), or even with buttoned cuffs: all his shirts have French cuffs, often monogrammed, and he favors the formal spread collar over the commoner narrow-point one. He owns forty suits, eighty shirts, and sixty-eight pairs of shoes, fifteen of which he has never worn. He prefers suspenders to belts, and he carries a walking stick ("Is personality," he says). He approves of hats but feels they do not suit him, because he is short and has too much hair. Close up, he emits the fragrance of a delicately floral cologne.



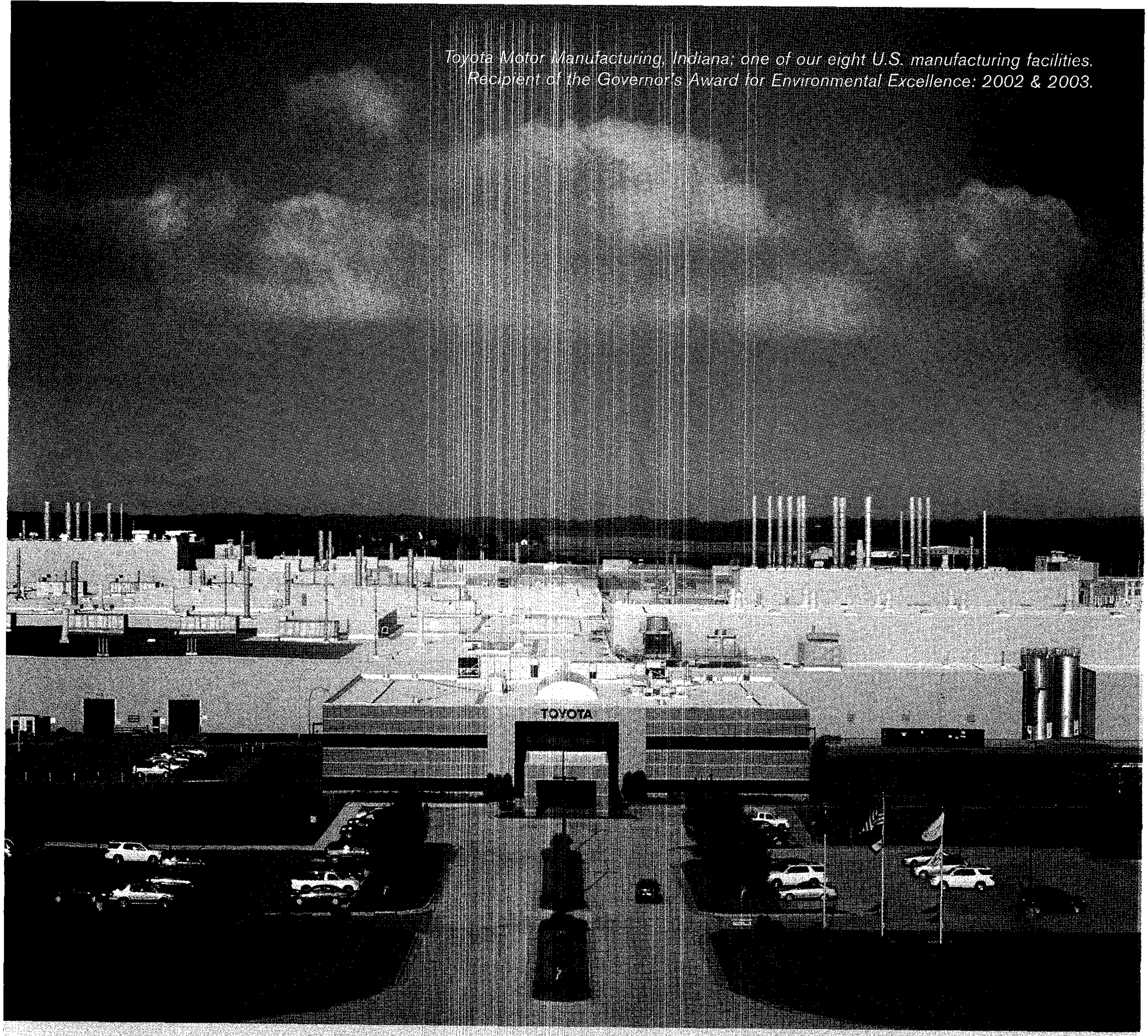
De Paris finds Bush "So nice!," but Ronald Reagan brought jelly beans.

GERALD SCARFE

De Paris is a historic figure, in senses both lofty and elegiac. When, in 1976, Brooks Brothers, which had outfitted almost every President from Lincoln to Ford, stopped offering custom-made clothing, it marked the end of an era. De Paris is conscious of his professional lineage, and he reflects it not only in his dress but in his grooming. His glossy white hair is styled in the fashion of the late fifteenth century, center-parted and brushed straight to his shoulders with, on moister days, a curl or two appearing around his face. He is only five feet six, but his head is that of a man twice his height. The overall effect is a happy union of Benjamin Franklin and Hercule Poirot.

These days, de Paris wears a matching set of cufflinks and tie clip, each bearing, on the front, the Presidential seal and, on the back, the engraved signature of George W. Bush. Reagan was his favorite Presidential customer and, in his opinion, the best-dressed one—Reagan was very chatty and gave him jelly beans, perhaps as a propitiating gesture, since he was always afraid that de Paris would stick him with pins during a fitting—but George W. Bush (a forty-four long, who favors navy and charcoal) runs a close second. "So nice! So friendly!" de Paris says of Bush, whom he sees sometimes three times a week, at the White House, for fittings. President Ford remembers him fondly. "When I was in the Congress, we were not as persnickety about our appearance," he says, "but when I became Vice-President and President it was almost mandatory that I spruce myself up, and Georges was just the person to make me look Presidential. My wife was always nagging me—'Jerry, you've got to improve your appearance'—so Betty was very happy that I began using him as my tailor." De Paris generally prefers Republican Presidents to Democrats. Carter and Clinton were cold in the dressing room, and the less said about Carter's fashion sense the better. Lyndon Johnson used to tease him about being short, and asked him whether he played American football. Over all, he feels that French politicians, who are always formally attired, are more dignified than American ones, who sometimes appear in public dressed like laborers. But the only person on the political scene who really upsets him is Howard Dean. "Oh!" he moans. "Bad suits, bad dress, put the sleeves up."

American Presidents, it must be said, do not tend to put their stamp on the sartorial world in the way that other leaders do. They do not have instantly recognizable looks that are imitated by, or pressed persuasively upon, millions of citizens, like Castro and Mao. They do not generally wear signature hats, like Karzai or Mobutu or Nehru. (Indeed, Kennedy was partly



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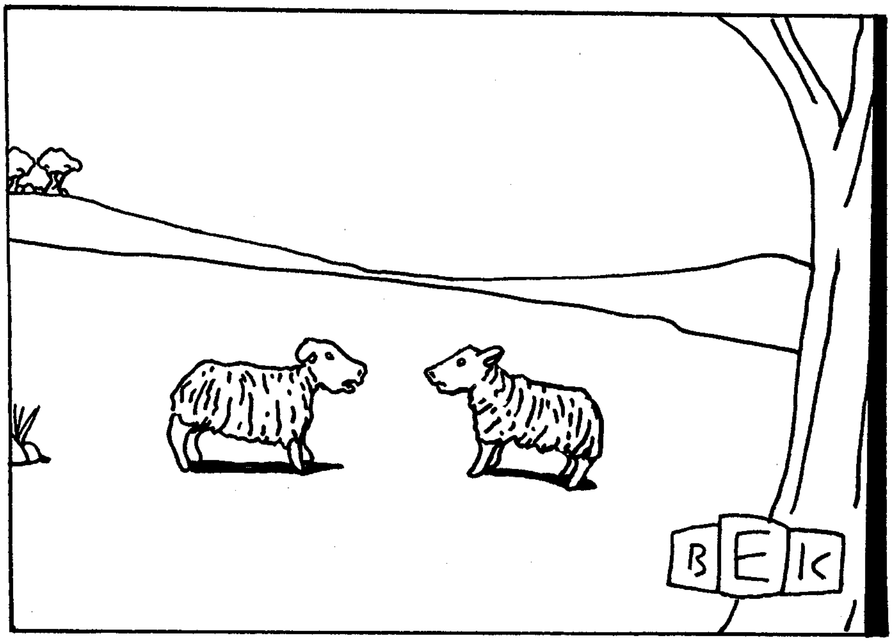

"I knew Mary would dump me when my fleece got a little gray."

responsible for the demise of the American hat.) They don't lead fashion in directions so original and outré that no one dares follow, like Qaddafi. But every now and then there are modest innovations. Reagan made the brown suit acceptable again. F.D.R. wore capes. Andrew Jackson introduced supercutaneous padding to make him seem less skinny.

In addition to his Presidential customers, de Paris has cut cloth for Tony Blair, Kofi Annan, Dick Cheney, Mario Cuomo, and Al Gore. He does not work only for the high and mighty, however. A few years ago, he made a forty-five-hundred-dollar suit for a New Jersey taxi-driver whose dream was to have a suit just like the President's, made by the Presidential tailor. The taxi-driver gave de Paris a two-hundred-dollar tip, and de Paris, moved by the poignancy of the occasion, presented the taxi-driver with a free tie and a free shirt. "I tell him, I can't make you President, but I can make you suit," he says.

De Paris is willing to work on any style of dress, but he has his preferences. He observes with approval, for instance, the increasing sartorial conservatism of young men today, most of whom reject the flashier styles of recent decades—such horrors as four-button jackets, wide lapels, and flared trousers—and desire instead, he says, to dress like their grandfathers. He foresees a revival of the three-piece suit in the not too distant future. De Paris is not prudish about flashiness where flash belongs: in addition to his conventional clothing, he maintains a sideline creating sequinned costumes and brassieres for acrobats and go-go dancers. (As a young man, he sewed bras at Christian Dior in Paris, and so when, in the early sixties, he was approached by two lady acrobats who needed bras made with extremely large cup sizes, he was able to satisfy them, and word spread.) It's just that, when it comes to men's formal clothing, he feels that there is really nothing to compare to a classically cut, meticulously hand-sewn suit of the English style. "Italian, you can cook spaghetti," he says, dismissively waving a plump hand. "The Italian people, they no make their suit in Italy. In Madagascar, India, Poland, any low-paid countries. I challenge everybody, I make the suits in the shop, all by hand. People call me crazy. I make old-mama-cook-old-daddy suit. That's me. That's Georges de Paris."

On a dank day in June shortly after Reagan's funeral, Georges de Paris could be found, as he can always be found, in his shop at Fourteenth Street and G, three blocks from the White House. Outside his shop, he is never seen with his outfit incomplete, but when he is working he usually takes off his jacket and replaces it with the insignia of his profession—a long yellow tape measure around his neck, silver-rimmed glasses on the tip of his nose, and a thimble on the middle finger of his right hand. He attaches to his shirtsleeve, with a metal fastening like a bicycle clip, a small red velvet pincushion.

The doorbell tinkled, and a man came in. The customer was a middle-aged real-estate developer who had stopped by for his second fitting for a navy blazer. He had been a customer for thirty years, since the days when de Paris worked out of a second-floor walkup on Twelfth Street and his dressing room consisted of a plastic shower curtain. In the course of their relationship, the developer had been converted from plain-front pants to pleats, and from plain pants bottoms to cuffs. Long ago, the developer had found the purchase of trousers to be a frustrating experience, because those which accommodated his bottom were always too large in the waist. De Paris had won his loyalty by tailoring to a perfect fit.

De Paris is far too well-mannered and conscious of his role to comment unfavorably on a customer's physique, but if he is asked his opinion he will suggest a flattering style. For the slimmer man, for instance, he recommends a three-button suit, and for the chubbier man a two-button. The slimmer man may wear flat-front trousers, but the rotund would be better advised to choose pleats, since these allow for a roomier fit and more "jump." The man with poor posture should stick to single-breasted suits, and the man with a generous bottom should avoid double-vented jackets. Men with red hair should wear brown suits, remembering that brown suits should never be worn with white shirts, only with blue. Then again, it is his belief that a superbly cut suit can rise above conventional restrictions. It is generally agreed, for instance, that a short man should not wear double-breasted jackets, but de Paris himself owns three, and feels that they look very good on him.

De Paris helped the developer into his half-constructed blazer.

"It only has one sleeve," the developer said, looking at himself in the mirror.

"New style for the summertime," de Paris told him.

De Paris stepped back and consid-

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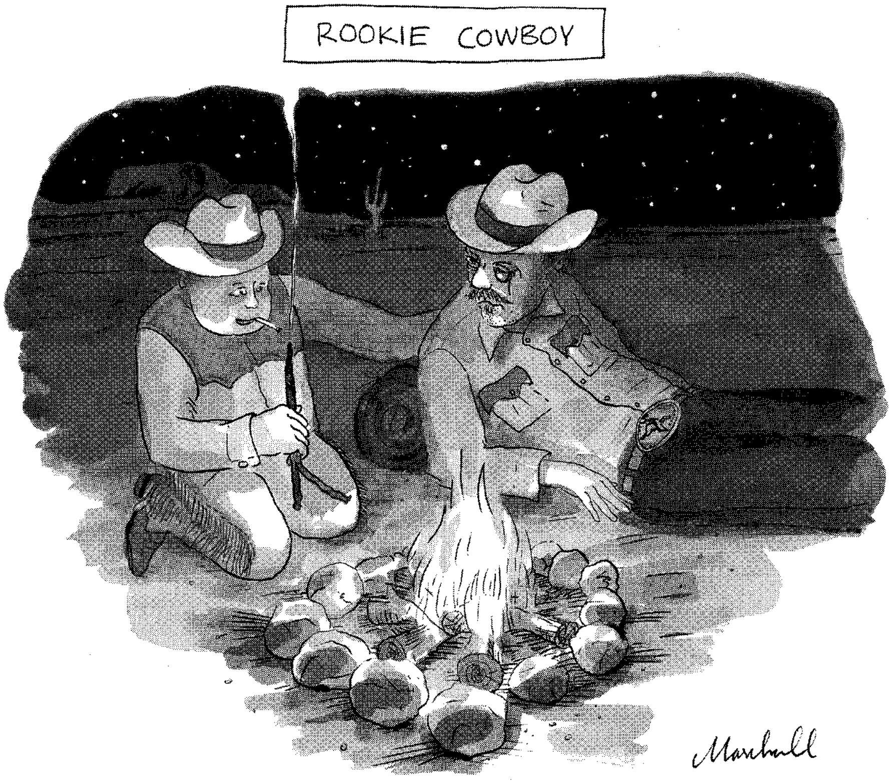
ered the man's shoulders and rear end. The jacket was a mite too wide along the upper back, he decided. He pulled the fabric in slightly and made a small chalk mark under the left sleeve.

"Don't make it too snug," the man said. "If I go away I'm going to gain some weight." De Paris wasn't worried. Although ready-made suits can typically be let out no more than an inch, Georges de Paris suits can be let out up to three inches because he makes them with ample fabric to spare.

The first step in the construction of a suit is the selection of the cloth, followed by the style. De Paris will inquire whether the customer has any special needs: certain men may need a hidden pocket for cash, for instance; a diamond dealer may need a zippered pocket for diamonds; some customers need extra room for a gun. Then there is the taking of measurements—shoulders, neck, arms, waist, chest, seat, hips, legs—which de Paris will render into a paper pattern.

The paper pattern is used as a guideline for cutting the cloth, with a prudent margin of error. De Paris will loosely baste together the jacket trunk's essential form, with the side and shoulder seams roughly sewn in with white thread and the outline of the pockets and lapels drawn onto the front of the cloth with chalk. (De Paris's assistant, Tony, makes the pants.) The jacket then awaits a second fitting, after which he will sew it into its final form, except for the sleeves and the collar, with a layer of canvas stitched in between the outer shell and the lining to give the garment shape. The sewing on of the sleeves is the most difficult part of making a jacket, followed closely by the attachment of the collar. In both cases, the slightest deviation from a perfect alignment will be instantly noticeable: the sleeve slightly twisted, failing to hang with the curve of the arm and the position of the elbow; the collar shifting uncomfortably with the neck.

One suit takes de Paris three days to complete. Every part of the jacket is sewn by hand, because that makes the garment more supple and gives him greater control over its shape. (Most tailors these days send their suits out to factories to be partially sewn or glued, but not he.) He charges between twenty-five hundred and forty-five hundred dollars for a suit, depending chiefly on the quality of the material. Good fabric can cost close to three hundred dollars a yard, and nearly four yards is required to make a two-piece suit for a medium-sized man.



"Willy, wake up! I figured out how to light my cigarette with a stick from the fire!"

Early the next morning, de Paris stood in the back of his shop, finishing the developer's blazer. He turned the jacket inside out and began to join the sleeve to the trunk, sewing with quick, long strokes and leaving a seam of tight, tiny stitches that disappeared into the cloth. Before each stitch he paused for a fraction of a second to make sure that his aim was true. He sewed so vigorously that the thread kept coming out of the needle. His pink face was creased into a grimace, as though he were experiencing a mild but irritating pain. When he stopped sewing for a moment, his forehead smoothed.

The back of the shop is where the work is done. There, in a smallish room separated from the fitting area by an open door, de Paris works at a large table. In the center of the table is a miniature ironing board, which is the surface on which he stitches and presses. To his right is a heavy, old-fashioned iron kept always hot in an iron base, three enormous pairs of scissors, several thick pieces of chalk, and some razor blades, which he uses to sharpen the chalk to a point. Toward the desk's perimeter, at distances that he must strain to reach, he has pushed several messy piles of paper (into one of which he has stuck a small French flag), piles of fabric scraps, a long horizontal file of phone numbers, a phone, a whisk broom, bolts of fabric, bits of canvas, old letters and bills, pens, pencils, rulers, a packet of Tic Tacs, a calculator, and a TV remote control, among many other things. On the walls behind him hang dozens of suits in various stages of completion. To his right, at a desk along the wall, sits whichever of his assistants is working that day, below a rack of thread spools hung on wooden pegs. On a bracket high up on the wall facing his table is a television set tuned to CNN with the sound off (de Paris likes to catch his suits' television appearances). His assistant Tony sat at the desk along the wall, altering a pair of trousers and quietly whistling. Tony is several years younger than de Paris, but unlike his boss he is married, and he has pinned a number of family photographs above his desk, along with a couple of vacation snaps of himself posing with showgirls in Aruba. The room smells pleasantly of ironing on damp cloth.

The front of the shop, where the customers enter, is a temple to masculine grace and the accoutrements that contribute to its refinement. Just inside the door de Paris has thoughtfully placed, on the crimson carpet, a brass umbrella stand and a small brass standing ashtray. To the left, crisp, hand-sewn cotton shirts in pale colors are folded in low stacks, according to size and style—spread collars, tab collars, narrow-point collars, club collars—on a wall of dark-wood shelves. Racks of suits, blazers, and overcoats hang along brass rails of appropriate heights (the shop sells ready-made clothing as well as custom), and on a shelf above the overcoats sits a small collection of briefcases. To the right, a dark-wood-and-glass display case exhibits various accessories: suspenders, wallets, belts, pocket handkerchiefs, cufflinks, tie clips, and ties that range in style from the conservative to the exuberant. On top of the case there is a small revolving stand that displays a colorful selection of pocket squares. Piled on a large surface above the racks of suits and on shelves behind the display case are dozens of bolts of fabric: worsteds and cashmeres and cottons and cloth of all imaginable weights and patterns—pinstripe, chalk stripe, houndstooth, herringbone, crow's feet, windowpane, Glen plaid, Harris tweed, sharkskin, nailhead. This front part of the store is where the seduction takes place—where a potential customer is encouraged to stroke the cloths with his fingers; to feel their softness and compare the differences in tightness and weight; to admire the intricacy of their patterns and the subtlety of their colors; to notice, in passing, the names of the customers written on the ends of some of the bolts (President Bush, Kofi Annan).

Between the front and the back of the shop is a small fitting area, consisting of a changing room hidden by a curtain and, opposite, a three-way mirror. On the wall above the changing area hangs a certificate entitled "Diplôme de Coupeur" from an *école professionnelle de coupe et de couture*, along with a signed photograph of de Paris with President

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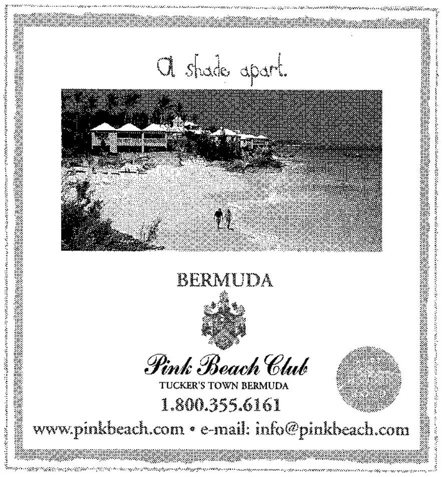

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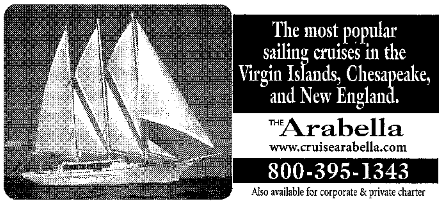

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Bush, a signed photograph of the previous President Bush and one of Al Gore, thank-you notes from Clinton and Andrew Card, and one from the current President Bush thanking him for a gift of a tie and a humidor.

The doorbell tinkled.

"Hello, Madame!"

The woman customer was in her sixties, pert and slim, with short brown hair. She had worked for most of her life on Capitol Hill but had recently retired.

"Step into my oval office," he said, gesturing courteously to the dressing room.

She emerged wearing a seafoam-green double-breasted skirt suit and still in her sneakers, for which she apologized, knowing that de Paris disapproved of such casual wear, much less paired with an outfit that he was being asked to honor with his professional attention. She had purchased the suit at Burberry during the nineteen-eighties, and though she still liked it, and felt, besides, that if you spent so much money on an outfit you shouldn't throw it away just because it was twenty years old, she had found herself, in recent seasons, unable to bring herself to appear in public in a jacket equipped with the gorilla shoulder pads of its period. Thus, she had brought it in for a pad reduction, along with the concomitant adjustment of sleeves, but in the course of the fitting she had found other small things wrong here and there, and when she came back to try it on again had found yet other small things wanting, and what with one thing and another she had become a familiar presence at the Georges de Paris establishment.

After a second trip to the dressing room, she emerged wearing a dress of black-and-royal-blue houndstooth material, its faux-double-breasted design accentuated by a double row of large square black buttons. This dress, too, had been brought in initially because of a shoulder-pad complaint, but had since been discovered to have other needs as well. The woman was given to gaining and losing weight, and when she lost weight she liked to have her clothes adjusted to reflect her achievement. Once, she got all the way down to a size 4 and had had all her clothes refitted accordingly, but then she had gone back up to an 8, before going down again to a 6, which she was now, and had had to let them out again. She was not one to accept anything less than excellence in fit, and in the service of this ideal she had so far spent, she estimated, about eighteen hundred dollars on the tailoring of five or six outfits. It was not just her own appearance that she was concerned about, however: on a previous visit she had presented de Paris with a bottle of Clairol Shimmer Lights conditioner, which she promised would enhance the sheen of his white hair. (So far, he had not dared to use it, fearing that it would make his hair fall out.)

"We fix it," de Paris promised her. "Slowly, slowly."

"Hey, if perfection is what you seek," she said and, giving him a breezy kiss on each cheek, departed.

In the early afternoon, de Paris finished attaching the second sleeve to the blazer and, biting off the thread, turned to the collar. He spread the length of cloth that would make up the collar's exterior on his mini-ironing board, dampened it, and pressed it with his iron. He held the iron down for twenty seconds as the steam rose around it, and glanced up at the television. Tony took out a sandwich.

"I was in hospital last week," Tony remarked.

"How you out so soon?" de Paris asked him.

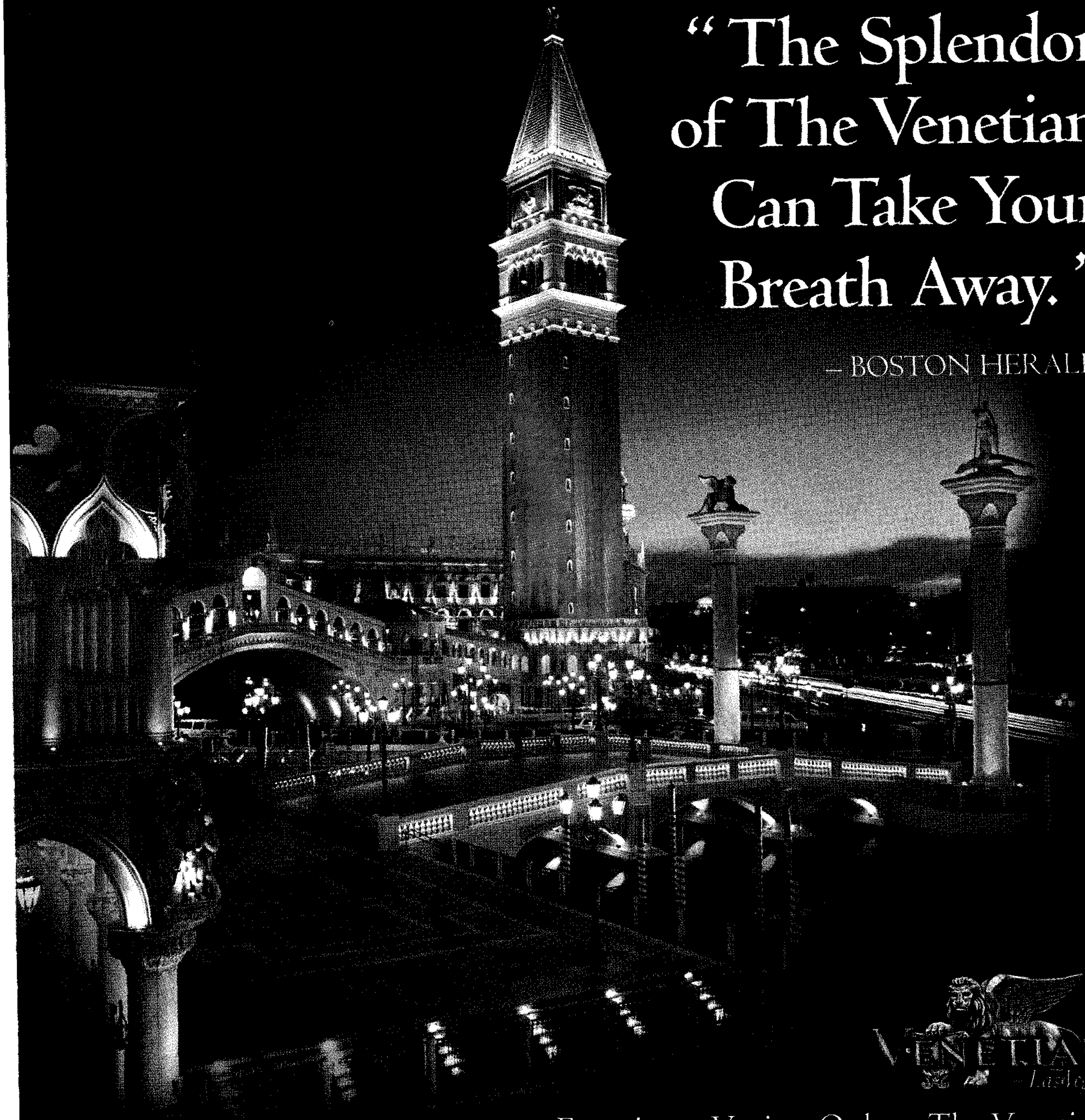
"My pressure was too high."

"I told you, don't fight with your wife."

"It was two hundred," Tony told him.

"I had a friend with that pressure," de Paris commented. "Now he dead."

When the fabric was ready, he blew on it to cool it, then laid it over the stiff canvas that would hold the collar's structure and basted the two together with wide white stitches. Because de Paris has no family, he works all the time. He arrives at his shop around nine in the morning and often stays there until eleven at night—later still if he has something particular to finish. He eats lunch in the mid-afternoon (customers tend to turn up at lunchtime proper), often at Old Ebbitt Grill, which is just around the corner. He sits at the bar and orders something light, such as the smoked salmon with toastlets and ca-



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PURSUITS OF PLEASURE

By Nao Hauser

If the promise of Las Vegas is an escape from the predictable—an exhilarating break from the ordinary—then you'll find no better gateway to it than "The Pursuit of Pleasure," the current exhibit at the Guggenheim Hermitage Museum at The Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino.

In works by Titian, Velázquez, Rodin, Picasso, and other artists from five centuries, this unusual and magnificent show, on view through January 16th, was designed to pay homage to Las Vegas itself. Each of the three dozen paintings and sculptures depicts one of the pleasures the city is known for, such as music, gaming, wining, dining, and romance. And because the art has been gathered from three of the world's greatest museums—the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, and the Kunsthistorisches in Vienna—you know that the pleasure you are experiencing here is something you won't find anywhere else.

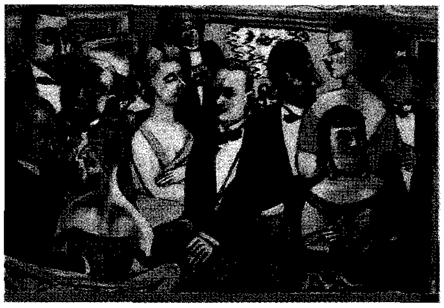
The same is true of a luxurious stay at The Venetian's Venezia tower. Take a separate elevator ten stories up from the hotel's main entrance to the Venezia lobby and you'll enter a private world built around a beautiful garden. Here you can gaze at a landscape of trees, flowers, pools, fountains, and statues linked by stone paths. Choose one of the fourteen suites at the garden's edge and you can enjoy the setting from your own hedge-shielded patio.

Go higher, to the five concierge-service floors at the tower's top, and the away-from-it-all pleasure comes with unique pampering. The opulent and relaxing suites are the same as those around the garden, each one twice the size of a typical hotel room, with an ample Italian-marble bath, a canopied bed, two flat-panel TVs, and a dining table. But on this level a personal concierge can attend to whatever details need arranging, and a lounge provides all-day complimentary food service. As a special treat, the bath butler can be summoned to have a martini waiting for you by the tub, along with "gin martini fizz" in the drawn bath, and lotions, music, and olives for nibbling. Further entertainment awaits in a fully stocked library of DVDs. And to enhance dreams, there's a menu of pillows, including double goose-down and memory foam.

Yet you'll look forward to waking up, because Bouchon, Thomas Keller's wonderful French bistro set in the Venezia's garden, has recently begun serving breakfast. Chef Keller's French Laundry in the Napa Valley and Per Se in New York are two of the world's toughest tables to book. But here, almost incredibly, you can linger in the natural-light-suffused dining room, or on the flower-decked patio, with his kitchen's warm-from-the-oven chocolate croissants or luscious, custardy brioche French toast.

In the outer world of The Venetian there are seventeen other restaurants, including AquaKnox, a sleek temple of seafood celebrating its first birthday this month. Chef Tom Moloney, who worked with Wolfgang Puck for more than a decade, has fish flown in daily. And his tight vigil over its quality, complemented by his skilled restraint and imagination, results in tastes as light and complex as those of the meaty yet delicate John Dory with fava bean succotash and a sweet-corn broth.

Another recent restaurant landmark: Emeril Lagasse's Delmonico Steakhouse was named a Grand Award winner by *Wine Spectator* magazine last month, in recognition of the exceptional depth and breadth of its wine list. This means that The Venetian now has two of only four Grand Award winners in Nevada. The other one, designated in 2002, is Piero Selvaggio Valentino, where both boutique bottlings and famed vintages find harmony in the regional Italian cooking of James Beard Award-winning chef Luciano Pellegrini.



Between indulgences the Canyon Ranch SpaClub® beckons, offering the mental float-away of yoga, Thai massage, herbal body masks, and even rock climbing. Spend a day in the spa's harmonious setting, relaxing in its gentle light and soothing sounds, and you'll know that the escape you hoped to find in Las Vegas has embraced you completely at The Venetian. ▲

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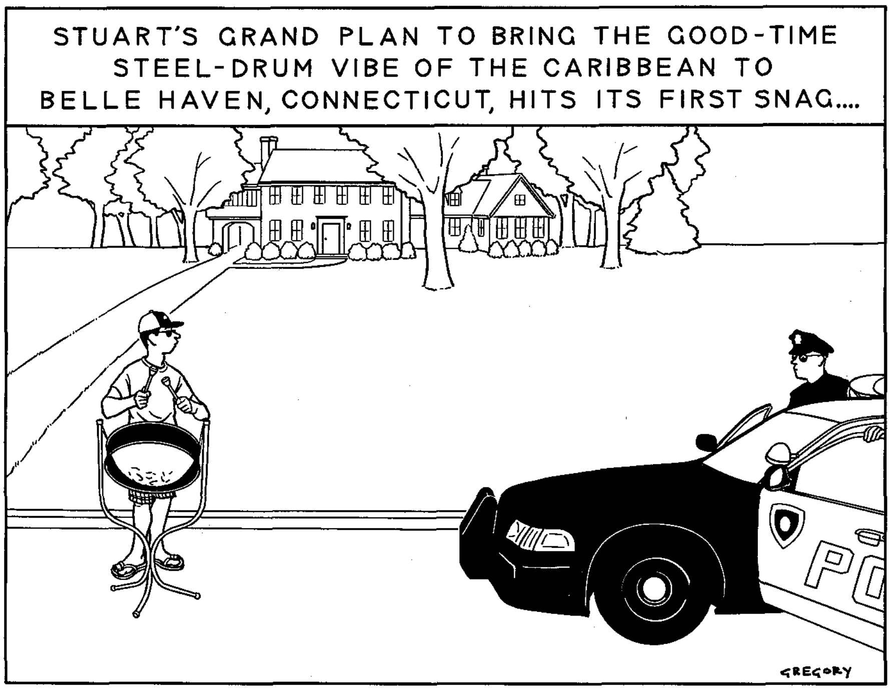
STUART'S GRAND PLAN TO BRING THE GOOD-TIME STEEL-DRUM VIBE OF THE CARIBBEAN TO BELLE HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, HITS ITS FIRST SNAG....

pers. Afterward, he cleans his hands by squeezing the juice of lemon slices onto the tips of his fingers. At the end of the day, he returns to his apartment, in Foggy Bottom, where he has lived for forty-two years, for a few hours of sleep. He plans to continue this routine for another quarter century, until he is ninety-five. "I no believe in retirement," he says. "Eighty-five per cent of people who retired is dead. What I'm gonna do, play with my finger, pee in the toilet?"

Far from retiring, he never even takes a vacation. He has been back to France only twice in forty years. For decades, the closest he got to days off were trips he took to Beckenstein's, in New York. Beckenstein's is one of the top men's-fabric retailers in the country and is currently owned by Neal Boyarsky and his son. Boyarsky's grandfather started the business, in the early years of the last century, picking rags off the street and selling them by the pound. These days, Beckenstein's sends its goods all over the world, to customers in Japan and Latin America who buy cloth with pinstripes of twenty-two-carat gold, and to members of the Saudi royal family, who order vicuña wool at three thousand dollars a yard to make soft blankets for their horses. Boyarsky's best customers are ballplayers, who may order two hundred custom suits in a year, and the rich men who might choose ten different suits a year but have each made three or four times so that they can replicate their wardrobe in each of their houses. Georges de Paris comes to Beckenstein's for English wool cloth made by Scabal, which he believes to be the best company in the business. "Scabal material is the beauty, the finesse of the suit," de Paris says. "Italian material is good, but touch the one, touch the other: New York steak and filet mignon—that's the difference." Boyarsky, who likes to be known as the Fabric Czar, is de Paris's oldest friend, having received him as a customer now for nearly forty years.

"Georges used to be a sucker," Boyarsky says. "Somebody comes in, they want to sell him goods, he'd buy it. Not anymore. Now he doesn't trust anybody, because he's been hurt by people." It's true that over the years de Paris has developed a somewhat dark view of humankind, or at least of tailors. He is always talking about how much jealousy there is in his business, how much backbiting, how many lies. "I have a very animus, nobody like me," he says. Boyarsky says, "Georges has no family, no hobbies, no real life, so his customers are his children. Most tailors, it's a matter of money—not Georges. He has girlfriends from time to time, and I said to him, Georges, why don't you get mar-

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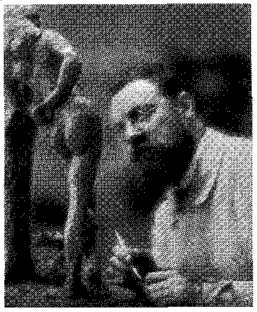
Eduard Steichen, Henri Matisse with "La Serpentina," Issey-les Moulineaux, France, platinum print, 1909. Estimate $15,000 to $25,000. At auction Oct 19.



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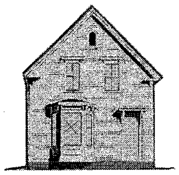

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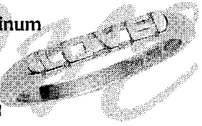

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ried? You need someone to take care of you. He says, I don't trust anybody, all they want is my money. I said, find a rich woman. He said, who wants to live with me? I'm working twenty-four hours a day."

De Paris decided that he wanted to be a tailor when he was eleven, and he demanded that his father's tailor take him on as an apprentice. His father was a judge in Marseilles and Paris, and the family was well-to-do. De Paris likes to tell the tale of how, as a boy during the Second World War, he delivered messages for the Resistance. When he was fourteen, in 1949, his father was assassinated, he says, shot in the face right in front of him, by a man taking revenge for his judgment against a relative in a rape case. After his military service, de Paris obtained his tailoring diploma in Paris, and later trained in Munich and London.

He came to America because of a woman. It was the spring of 1960, he was twenty-five, and he had been corresponding with a French-American girl he had never met who had seen a picture of him in a magazine. She sent him a picture of herself, in which, he says, she looked like Brigitte Bardot, and invited him over to stay with her at her parents' house, in suburban Maryland. Alas, when he arrived he discovered that she looked nothing like Brigitte Bardot—"She was the ugly woman! Check out the mustache"—and when she demanded, after three weeks, that he marry her or leave the house, he left. Unfortunately, she refused to give back his life savings of three thousand dollars, which he had given to her to put in a bank for safekeeping, and so when he left he was penniless and barely spoke a word of English. He walked into Washington and began sleeping in Franklin Park. He tried to get work as a tailor, but because he was unable to wash he smelled terrible and nobody would hire him. He slept in the park for six months, until, finally, a woman who worked at Bond, a large men's-clothing store, took pity on him, hosed him off, and gave him a job.

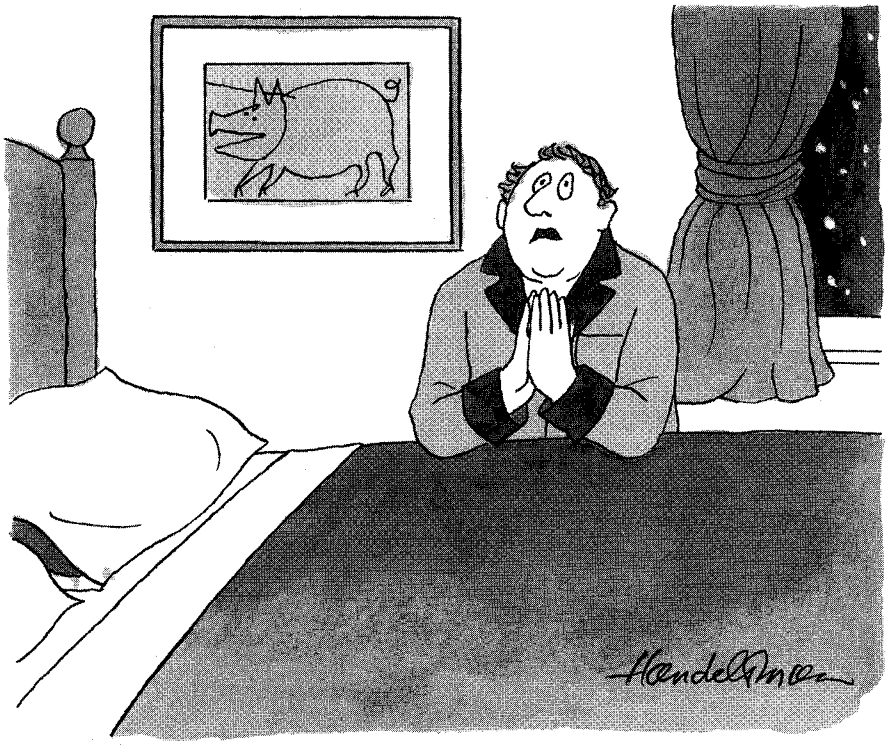
At first, he continued to sleep in the park in order to save money—he washed in Bond's men's room. After a few months, having saved four hundred dollars, he opened his own tailoring business, on Twelfth Street. "I no have a scissor," he says. "I cut the material by the Gillette razor. No toilet, nothing. I sleep in the floor. No machine. I work to four, five o'clock in the morning for build up myself." Then one day Otto Passman, a congressman from Louisiana, walked into his shop, became a customer, and in 1963 recommended him to the Vice-President, Lyndon Johnson.

When de Paris finished pressing the navy blazer, he slipped it on to see how it looked. He shuffled around his worktable to the three-way mirror in the fitting area and gazed at himself. The blazer came down nearly to his knees, and all its white basting, which he had not yet removed, standing out against the dark-navy wool, made him look like the Pearly King in an East London street fair. He smoothed the sides, and turned this way and that to inspect every angle. His white hair gleamed under the bright fitting lights. He decided that the blazer hung perfectly. "Ready to go!" he said to himself, taking it off. Now all that remained was stitching up the lower hem, hemming the lining, attaching the buttons, taking out the basting, and, the coup de grâce, sewing a Georges de Paris label at the back of the neck and on the inside breast pocket.

Toward the end of the day, a young man in his late thirties or early forties walked in. He was wearing a khaki suit whose trousers were a little too short and an American-flag pin on his lapel. He had close-cropped brown hair that was just beginning to thin in the back. He explained that he was down from Pennsylvania for a couple of days on business and, asking for a good tailor, had been sent to Georges de Paris by a concierge at the Metro Center Marriott whose advice he particularly trusted.

"Oh, I'm the bad tailor," de Paris told him. "The good tailor is not here today."

The young man had never owned a bespoke suit, but he'd been thinking about getting one for a long time. His wife sewed her own dresses, he said, and when they were first married, ten years ago, she offered to make him a suit herself, so he bought a length of beautiful gray checked wool and all the necessary buttons and pads. After three years of effort, though, the project defeated her—a man's suit, she found, was much, much more difficult to make than a dress—and the beautiful gray cloth was still sitting in a closet. By now, the young man fiercely wanted a custom suit, but he had four small children and wasn't sure he could justify the expense. He



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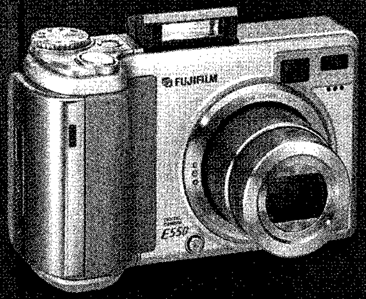
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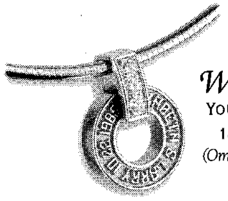

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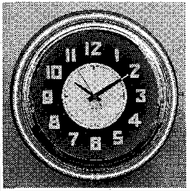

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appeared to be hoping that de Paris would persuade him that the additional cost was actually a saving.

"I'm a scientist," he told de Paris, "but my job is quality, so I always know the value of good quality. I thought I was buying a good suit when I spent eight hundred dollars, but the tailoring wasn't good so I felt like I wasted the money."

De Paris led the young man over to one of his piles of fabric bolts. "Feel this," he said. "This is Super 130. If you travel a lot, all the time in the limos and cars, you're gonna need a three- or four-season suit. Ten ounce. Touch this!" A ten-ounce Super 130 is actually a relatively delicate fabric compared with, say, an eleven- or twelve-ounce hard-finished worsted, or a Super 100 or 120. (The larger number denotes a lower "micron count" and a finer yarn.) De Paris usually recommends a heavy, all-season cloth for men who travel frequently or have to look good in public, because it stands up well to pressure and movement, and these days, with air-conditioning, summer-weight suits are seldom necessary. (The President won't wear anything less robust than Super 100.) Super 200s are the finest fabrics, and can cost a thousand dollars a yard. They feel marvellously soft and weightless on the body, almost like pajamas, but they wrinkle easily, and so are suitable only for a man in a position not to worry about his appearance.

"This is wool?" the young man asked.

"Cashmere wool, my friend," de Paris told him. "And this," he said, pointing to another bolt, "is Super 180, top material. One hundred seasons. You know what I do for you? I make a second pair of slacks. That's the best deal, because you travel, you wear one and then change to the other. Two slacks is two suits."

The young man fingered the Super 180 and felt how amazingly light and pliant it was.

"What's the best price I can get a suit out of this for?" he asked.

"This I can give you for thirty-five hundred," de Paris said. "Cannot go cheaper. Very expensive material."

The young man absorbed this news for a moment in silence.

"So if I get one of these suits that's made elsewhere, it'll fit well but . . ." he began, and trailed off hopefully.

"Those suits—fusion," de Paris said with contempt. "I cannot control that. I sew by hand." Fusion is the gluing process by which most ready-made and made-to-measure suits these days are put together. Because fused seams cannot be undone by a tailor, they limit the extent to which a suit can be altered to fit.

"And how many dry cleanings does this hold up in?"

"Sir, the dry cleaner, you not give to the Chinese people. In Vietnam, the people was police officer, they come to America, now is cleaner. They push the machine like this, *psssh!* They put spray. Besson's is professional cleaner, not charlatan."

De Paris tells his customers that they should clean a suit no more than once a year and wear it no more than once a fortnight. Between wearings, it should be allowed to breathe, first on a hanger near an open window to rid it of smells, and then in a closet wrapped in a plastic clothing bag open at the bottom. People who do not treat their suits well are, in de Paris's estimation, very low types indeed.

"I have a guy, I make a tan-color gabardine Super 120, very light," he told the young man. "It cost him nineteen hundred dollar, five, six year ago. He say, I have a Jaguar car outside. You know what's the Jaguar car? Bicycle! He set out on the bicycle, it was rain, the leather color from the seat come out all his behind becoming brown. You know what I say to him? I say, mister, take your goddam money and give me my suit back. You don't know how to wear. No. 1, you wear no underwear, second you wear your Jaguar the bicycle, goddam give my suit back!"

The young man shook his head in disbelief.

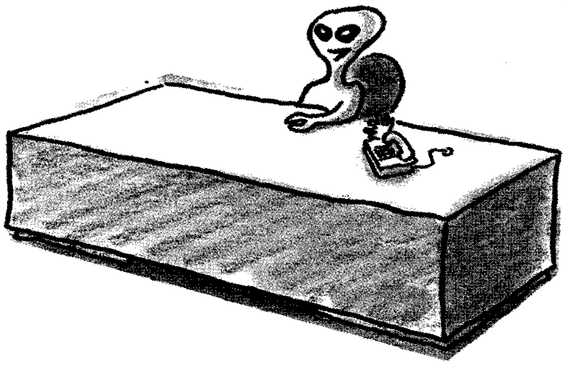
"Well, I need two more suits and I'd like to get 'em," he said wistfully. "I just have to tell my wife what these are running."

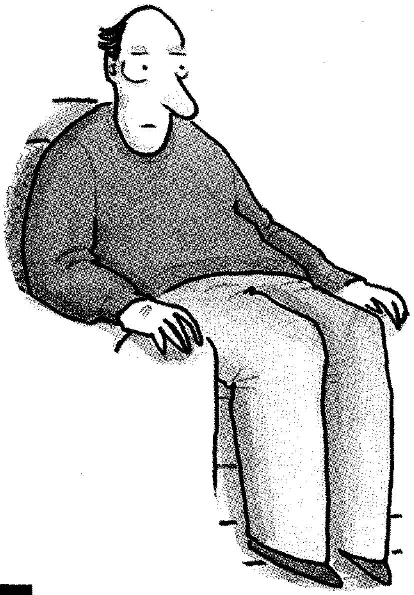
"You bring madame over here," Georges de Paris advised him. "I be wait for you." ♦

NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK

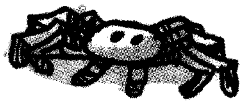
From the Burlington (Vt.) Free Press.

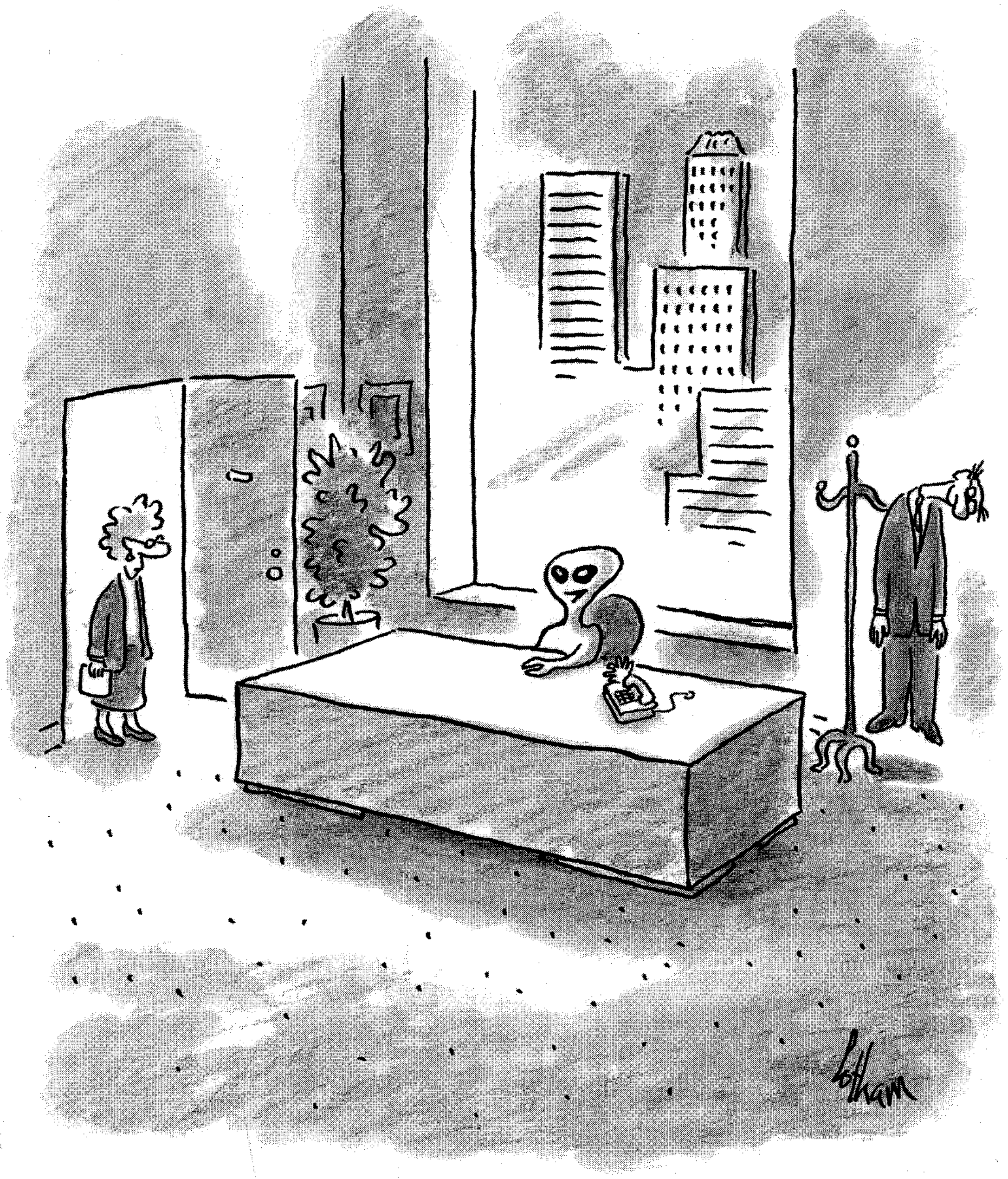
Community Medical School Classes, 6-7 p.m. Tuesdays through April, Carpenter Auditorium, Given Medical Building, UVM. Tuesday, "Can a Damaged Lunch Be Repaired? How Adult Stem Cells Might Help."





THE FUNNY PAGES





"Please, no visitors until I'm in costume."

THE FUNNY PAGES

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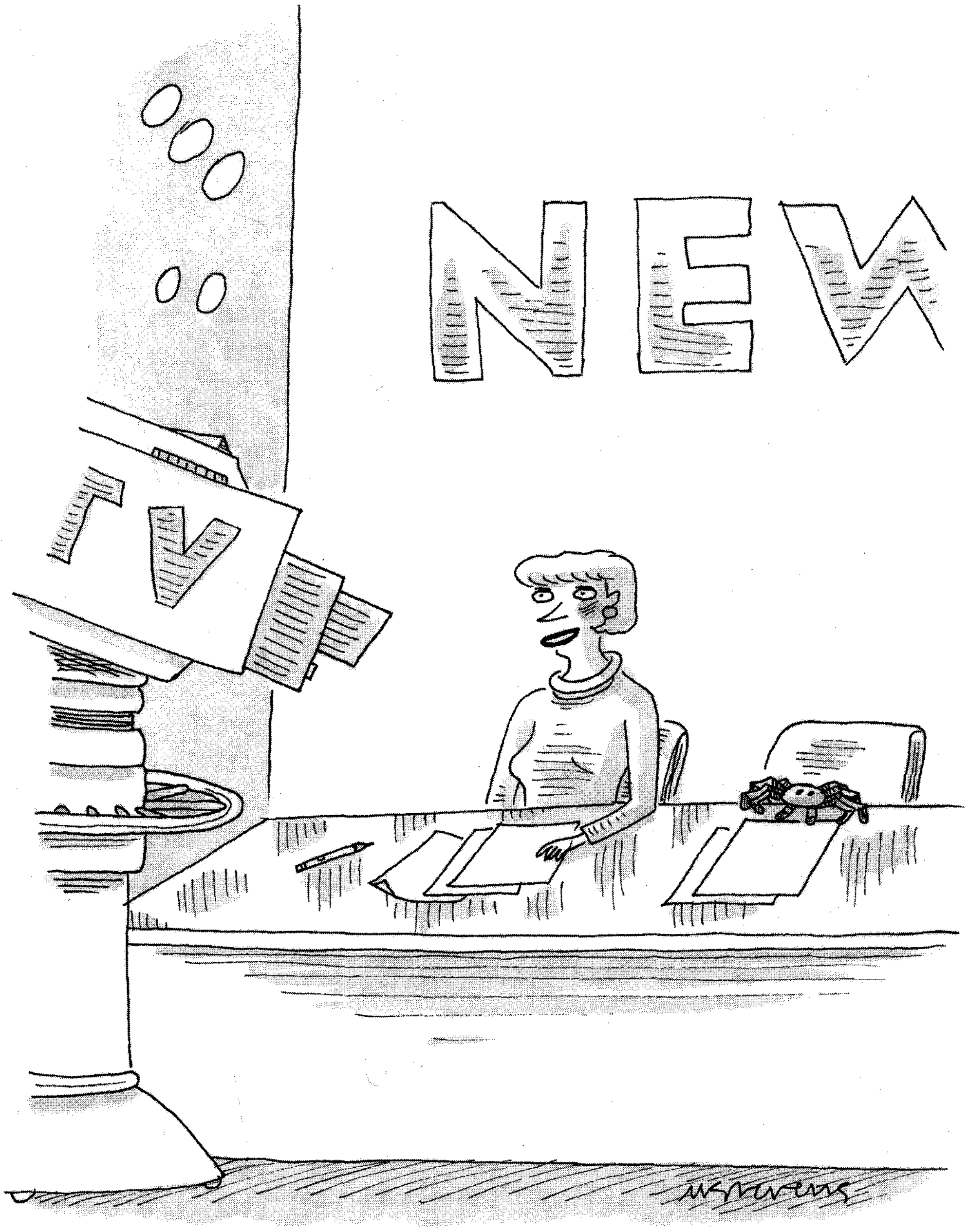

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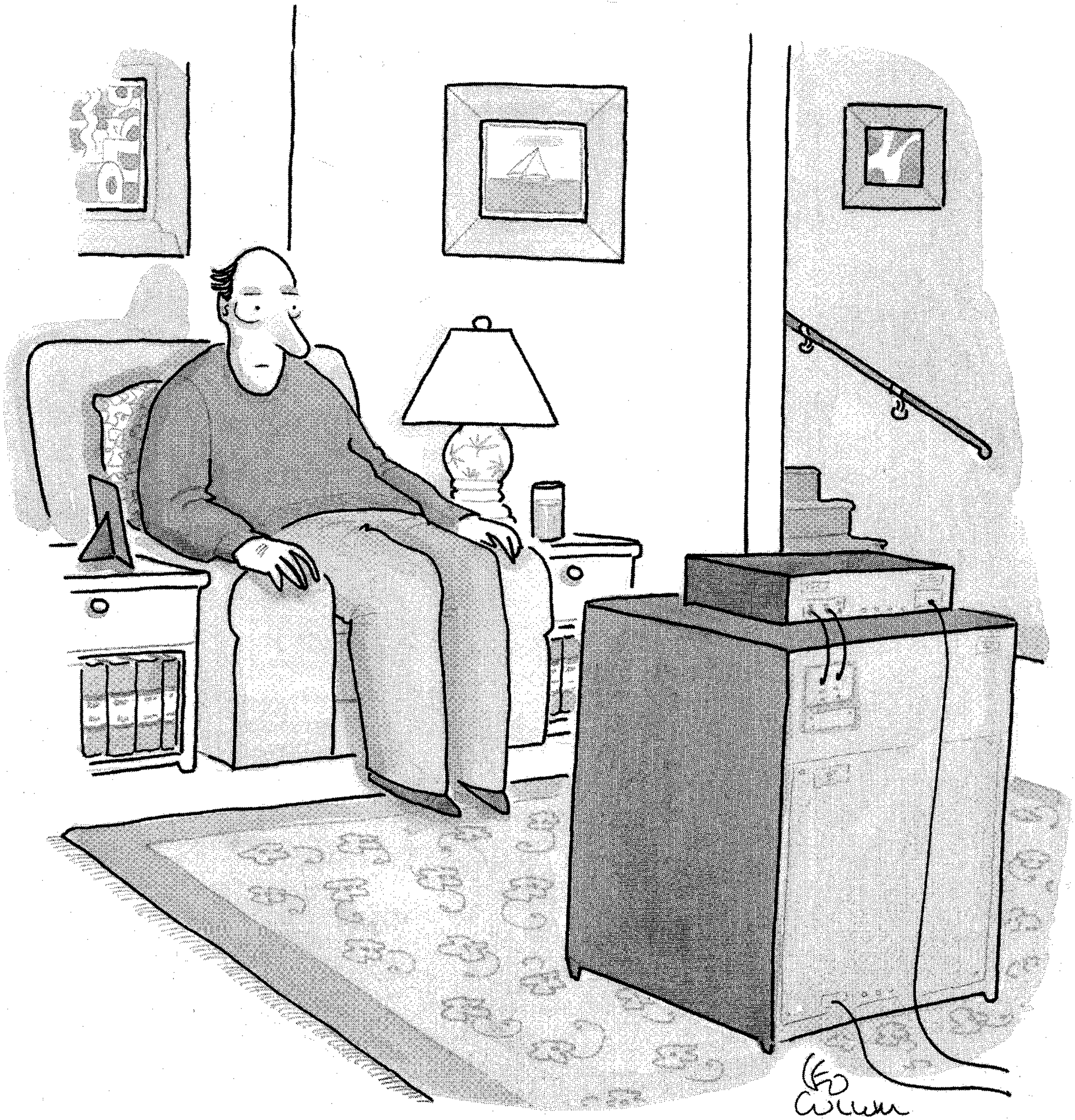
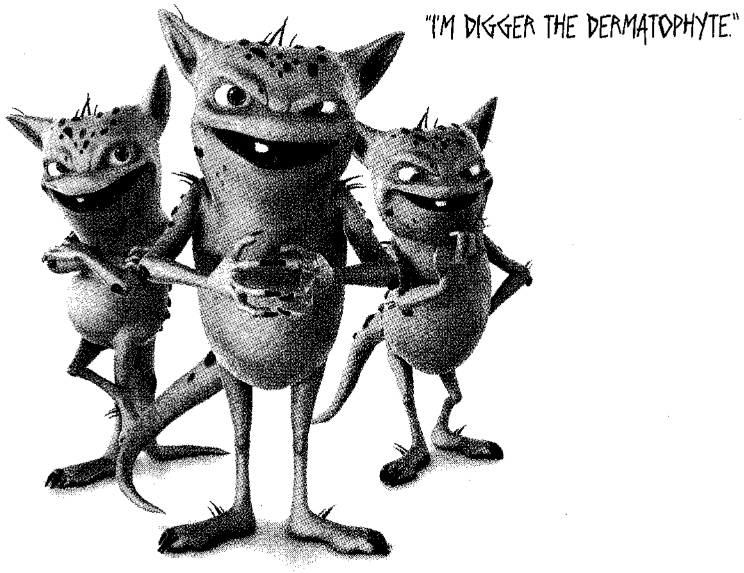


"It's 11 P.M. . . . do you know what your blood pressure is?"

THE FUNNY PAGES

They're living deep under your nails.


"I'M DIGGER THE DERMATOPHYTE."

Ask your doctor how Lamisil® Tablets can help make them leave.

Do you have thick, discolored or flaky nails? A live fungus, or *dermatophytes*, may have gotten under them. And these guys are having too much fun — eating, growing, causing an active infection that won't go away on its own. Your doctor can help. Ask about Lamisil Tablets, the #1 prescribed treatment that's proven effective at sending nail fungus packing.

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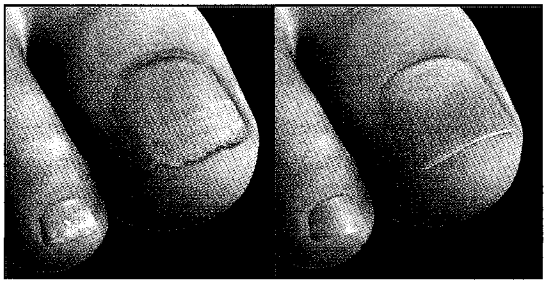

It takes about 10 to 12 months for new nails to grow in. But you may start to see clearer, healthier nails in just 3 months. Results may vary.

Lamisil Tablets aren't for people with liver or kidney problems. Rarely, serious side effects in the liver or serious skin reactions have occurred, so your doctor may do a simple blood test to check for liver problems. Other side effects including headache, diarrhea, indigestion and rash were generally mild.

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© 2004 Novartis C-LMT-1254 Please see patient information on adjacent page.

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT LAMISIL® (terbinafine HCl tablets) TABLETS

Generic name: terbinafine (tur-bin-uh-feen)

Please read this as well as any other information your doctor gives you about LAMISIL® Tablets and fungal infections of the toenail or fingernail. Only a doctor or other qualified healthcare professional has the training necessary to determine if LAMISIL® Tablets are right for you.

What are LAMISIL Tablets?

LAMISIL Tablets are a prescription medicine for the treatment of onychomycosis (on-ee-ko-my-ko-sis). LAMISIL Tablets are an antifungal. They treat onychomycosis under the nail bed where it grows. LAMISIL Tablets are white, circular tablets bearing "LAMISIL" on one side and "250" on the other side.

What is onychomycosis?

Onychomycosis is a fungal infection of fingernails or toenails. Because the fungus infects the area underneath the nail and in the place where the nail forms, it can be very stubborn and difficult to treat. The infection may cause the nail to turn colors like white, yellow or brown, and become thick and brittle. Additionally, it may be painful for some people.

How do LAMISIL Tablets work?

When you take LAMISIL Tablets, the active ingredient, terbinafine, travels to the infected area under the toenail or fingernail. Because terbinafine accumulates and remains in the area of the nail that is growing, it can continue to work for months, even after your prescription is finished, allowing the nail to heal naturally over a period of time.

How long will it take LAMISIL Tablets to work?

For toenail infections, treatment time is 12 weeks. For fingernail infections, treatment time is 6 weeks. You should see improvement within a couple of months after completing treatment, but it takes time for nails to grow in. In fact it may take about 10 to 12 months for toenails and about 4 to 6 months for fingernails to grow in completely.

How are LAMISIL Tablets taken?

Take one tablet per day (it may be taken with or without food), as directed by your physician. For best results, be sure to take the complete course of prescribed medicine.

Who should not use LAMISIL Tablets?

LAMISIL Tablets should not be taken by anyone allergic to any of its ingredients. Also, LAMISIL Tablets should not be taken by anyone who has problems with his or her liver or kidneys, or by pregnant or nursing women. Because LAMISIL Tablets have the potential to interact with some other drugs, including some commonly prescribed antidepressants and beta-blockers, tell your doctor if you are taking any of these or any other prescription or over-the-counter medications.

What are the possible side effects of LAMISIL Tablets?

In rare instances, serious side effects on the liver, including rare cases of death and liver transplant, have occurred in people taking LAMISIL Tablets. In the majority of these cases, the patients had preexisting medical problems that may have contributed to the event, and therefore the relationship between the event and LAMISIL Tablets was unknown. Because of the potential for liver damage, people with liver disease should not take LAMISIL Tablets.

How do I know if my liver is healthy?

It is recommended that your doctor conduct a liver function test before prescribing LAMISIL Tablets. And you should watch for symptoms of liver problems while taking LAMISIL Tablets. If you experience persistent nausea, anorexia, fatigue, vomiting, right upper abdominal pain or jaundice, dark urine or pale stools while taking LAMISIL Tablets, stop taking LAMISIL Tablets immediately and call your doctor right away.

Are there other possible side effects?

LAMISIL Tablets may cause some side effects in some people. These side effects, as determined by three clinical studies, were mild and in general did not lead to discontinuation of treatment with LAMISIL Tablets. The most commonly reported side effects were headache, which occurred in 12.9% of patients, gastrointestinal symptoms, including diarrhea (5.6%), upset stomach (4.3%), taste disturbances (2.8%), nausea (2.6%), abdominal pain (2.4%), flatulence (2.2%), rash (5.6%), itching (2.8%), hives (1.1%), and abnormalities in laboratory tests of liver enzymes (3.3%). Because some people have developed serious skin conditions while taking LAMISIL Tablets, stop taking LAMISIL Tablets and tell your doctor if you develop a rash. Also, tell your doctor if you experience any other side effects.

Are LAMISIL Tablets safe for children?

No studies have been conducted to evaluate the safety of LAMISIL Tablets in children.

What else should I know before taking LAMISIL Tablets?

Isolated cases of decreases in white blood cell count have been reported. In all of the reported cases to date, these have been reversible. If you have problems with your immune system, your doctor may need to monitor your white blood cell count carefully if you take LAMISIL Tablets for more than 6 weeks. In some cases, LAMISIL therapy may need to be discontinued.

Also, changes in the retina and lens of the eye have been reported following the use of LAMISIL Tablets. The significance of these changes is not known. In clinical studies, 0.9% of patients discontinued taking LAMISIL Tablets because of visual disturbances. There have also been isolated cases of prolonged taste disturbances reported. In rare instances taste disturbances associated with LAMISIL Tablets have been severe enough to result in decreased food intake leading to significant and unwanted weight loss. Tell your doctor if you notice these symptoms.

How should I store LAMISIL Tablets?

LAMISIL Tablets should be stored in a tight container, away from direct light, at or below 77° Fahrenheit. Keep LAMISIL Tablets and all other medications away from children.

LAMISIL Tablets were prescribed only for you. DO NOT share LAMISIL Tablets with anyone else.

For more information about LAMISIL Tablets and fingernail or toenail fungal infections, talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
East Hanover, New Jersey 07936

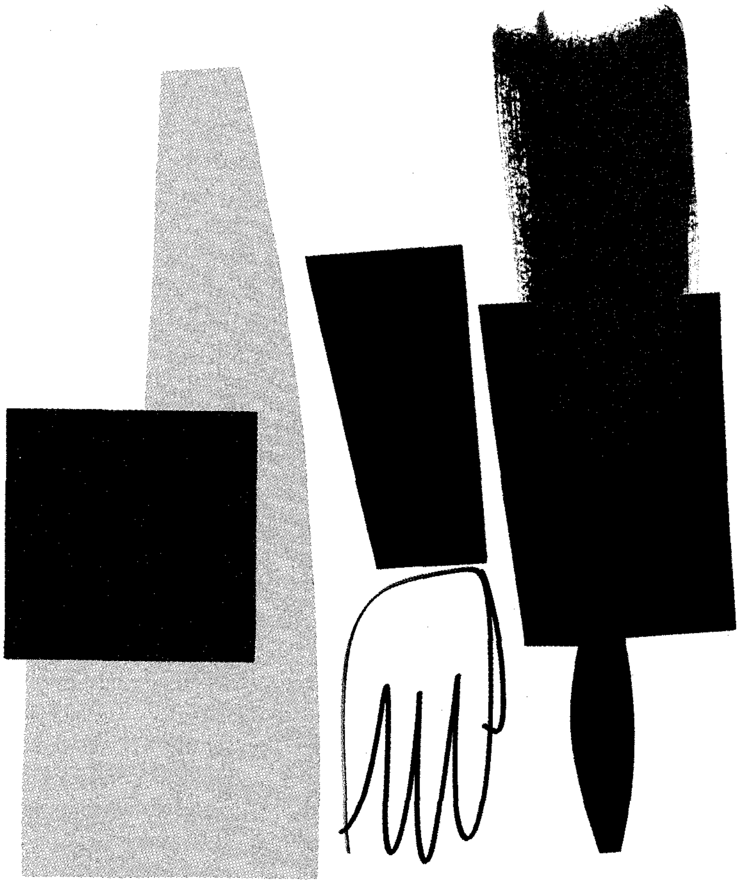
REV: May 2001 LMT-4017

FICTION

HANWELL IN HELL

BY ZADIE SMITH

I am looking to enter into correspondence with anyone who remembers my father, Mr.—— Hanwell, who was living in the central Bristol area between 1970 and 1973. Any details at all will be gratefully received by daughter trying to piece together the jigsaw. Please write back to P.O. Box 187.



LAURIE ROSENWALD

I spent just one night with your father, in Bristol, thirty-four years ago. He was down on his luck at the time, as was I. We had both suffered dramatic reversals of fortune and recognized immediately that we had failure in common—a rare example of masculine intuition. Each sniffed out the other's catastrophe. For my part, I had lost my livelihood and my house; I spent the spring of that year bewildered and outraged, almost unable to comprehend that I now lived in a gruesome basement flat in which lichen seemed to grow upon every damp surface. A crooked business partner who took cash under the counter, compounded by my own careless accounting, had separated me from my business (a small chain of Bristol off-licenses) so completely that I was reduced to a salesman's existence. I hawked the new American fridge-freezers from a catalogue, door-to-door. It was a dismal job and one that required me to spend a humiliating amount of time—or so I thought then—with women. In the off-licenses, all my staff had been men, and I always appreciated the fact; emotionally men are so much simpler. My new job made me feel as if I were being returned to the domestic scenes of my childhood. I seemed always to be in kitchens having cups of tea pressed upon me, repelling the timid advances of motherly women. Hanwell's situation was of course somewhat reversed: he valued the domestic and lamented its loss; with it went all the things he cared for—women, the home, family. You ask in your letter if I know why you and your sisters were left in London—I don't know, but it must have been against his will. No one would choose the life that Hanwell had.

When I met him, he was washing dishes in Barry Franks's first restaurant, halfway up the hill on Park Street. It is easy to forget now that Barry Franks was not born on the BBC holding a glass of red in one hand and his own cookery book in the other. That came later, at a time in England when people seemed able to lasso the moon quite as easily as Hanwell and I, ten years earlier, had managed to plummet beneath acceptability. In 1970, Barry Franks was only the owner of a mediocre Continental bistro, eponymously named. The cassoulet was gray, the veal chewy. You didn't go to Franks for the food. It was that rare thing: a place with atmosphere. Franks was a legendary drunk even then, and he brought the freewheeling uncertainty of that condition to every corner of his place. Although its pretense of sophistication seems ridiculous now—the Chianti bottles hugged by raffia, the red-and-white checked tablecloths—its clientele never were; the mix of the great, the good, and the not-so-good was exhilarating. Franks was the most popular place in the city after nine in the evening, and it was natural to assume, as I did, that the owner of a place like this need only flip the "OPEN" sign and watch the money roll in, but it was not so. Franks was steadily drinking away the profits. He was in such severe debt with the local heavies that he had been compelled to give up the entire back room to them and their pleasures. You could never get a table in that room; you could only sit at the curious walnut church pews that lined two walls and look on at the scene—table after table of wardrobe-shouldered goons with girls on their knees. I never saw them pay a penny for anything. Barry Franks once admitted to me that the unpaid tab came to six thousand pounds, an astronomical sum at the time. I could have bought a good flat in town for that money. Supposedly the goons were the scions of two local Italian families in the ice-cream business, but whatever Italian blood they possessed had been thoroughly diluted in the Avon. West Country people are as sallow as any European, and these ones looked and sounded no different from the rest of us. Their suits were tighter, that

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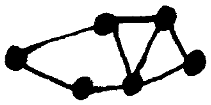
was all. And they were sentimental about beauty—sometimes it seemed that all their criminal machinations were merely the quickest route at their disposal to those high roads that lead to beautiful food and beautiful music and beautiful women. It was their idea to turn Franks into a kind of jazz bar, and to this end a five-piece band of white Bristolians meticulously and earnestly imitated Louis Armstrong's Hot Five on a little makeshift stage in the back room. I liked the band, especially their precise fingers, neither inspired nor fussy but always accurate. When you feel lost in the world, there is some joy to be gleaned from exact imitations of familiar things.

The night I met Hanwell, I came in very late with a girl I was seeing at the time. Her name is lost to me, but the outline of her chest is not—huge, carefully wrapped and cantilevered, like a present on a shelf which she had not yet decided to give away. She was thirty years my junior and also a diluted Italian, although she was still taking her Catholicism neat. I had spent the better part of five hours that evening—in my flat, in my car, in the cinema, and in a park—persistently trying to get my hand to go where she would not have it go. By the time we reached Franks, we were both exhausted and bad-tempered and the maître d's familiar complacent explanation that the back room was "fully occupied" suddenly enraged me. I kicked up the kind of fuss that I, having no power, had no right to kick up, while the fellow nodded solicitously, all the time continuing to discreetly direct his waiters to this table and that.

"But it is *occupied*," he repeated in that odious way, as if the back room were a bathroom; he was waiting for me to finish making a fool of myself. I remember the girl laid her hand on my biceps as if in expectation of one of those ludicrous displays of machismo so common in the kind of Hollywood schlock we had just seen at the Odeon. But she was out with the wrong type of man for that. We were led meekly to the church pews to sit alongside other couples with drinks on their knees, but at the last minute a fat man and his friend rose to leave a table just behind me—I pushed the girl quickly into the vacated seat and took the one beside her. The maître d' shrugged as if to say the consequences would not be his responsibility. I ordered two osso bucos, although it was already eleven and neither of us was remotely hungry. I was perversely determined to get the maximum of whatever enjoyment was available out of the best seats at Franks. How good could it possibly feel to sit here? The band was loud, and the two of us turned our chairs to face the stage—a welcome relief from looking at each other. The trumpeter stood up to do his solo, and then the clarinet player did the same; the bassist leaned forward for his minute in the sun and jauntily spun his massive instrument; the pianist lifted lightly from his seat when his turn came; the drummer, not able to change his position much, liked to bend his head low and lean into his drums, raising his elbows high at the moment the rest of the band fell silent. The solos went round three or four times before I remembered our food and noticed the angry mutterings from other tables. It was not uncommon for meals to turn up late at Franks, but this was a complete meltdown; the whole room was waiting to be served.

Suddenly, a sandy-haired, balding man with a pensioner's forlorn pink bulb on the end of his nose plonked down two plates in front of us. On both plates three French crêpes, stuffed with a creamy prawn-and-mushroom mixture, sat in a pretty triangle formation. The man was dressed not like a waiter or a chef but like a dishwasher, his dirty sleeves turned up. Sweat sprung from every pink pore in his innocent face. He smiled at us hopefully. Before we had a chance to object, he had moved on to the next table, passing out more of these crêpes that nobody had ordered. For a minute the noise of consternation reached a pitch and threatened to topple over into revolution—but most of the clientele, like me, were too drunk and too weary, and then the first mouthful was sampled, and it was extremely good; we quieted down. The crêpes were not fussy like Barry Franks's food, and they had no pinchbeck pretensions—if your Parisian grandmother had to rustle something up at the last minute, she might cook those crêpes. Since that evening, I have passed many nights in restaurants far better than Franks, but I can't think of a meal I've enjoyed more. Just after midnight, the man passed by our table again, and I stopped him.



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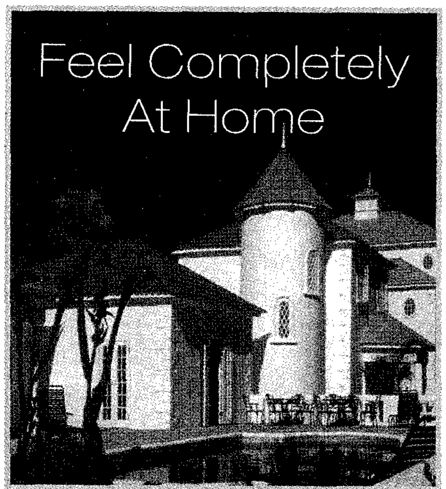

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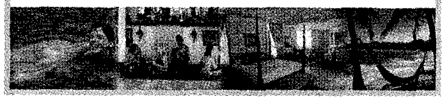

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He looked at me warily and said nothing. I wondered then whether his innocence went all the way down; his face was so devoid of guile your first instinct was to think him a simpleton of some kind.

"What's your name?"

"Hanwell, sir."

"I'm Clive, Clive Black. I'd like to shake the hand of the chef."

He looked at my hand but did not touch it. It was strange to have him call me sir—Franks wasn't restaurant enough for such civilities. And looking at him more closely I realized Hanwell was too bald too early; he was still in his very early forties, and I was only ten years older.

"Did you make these?" I tried again.

"They were *delicious*," the girl said, extravagantly. Maybe she even licked one of her stubby fingers. Hanwell bit his lip. He seemed to be preparing to lie but then thought better of it.

"Well, yes. Were they all right?"

"They were more than all right. Best food I've ever had in here."

"I'm sure that's not true, sir."

"It's completely true. What's wrong with Franks, then? Tight again, is he?"

"He's feeling a bit under the weather. High temperature," Hanwell said, loyally, looking away. I smiled.

"It's amazing how many high temperatures Franks gets. He's like a five-year-old child."

I took out a cigarillo—the one luxury I refused to give up—and offered him one. He declined. "He's very lucky to have you to cover for him last minute."

"I'm glad you enjoyed the food, sir," said Hanwell tersely, and turned to go. But I wouldn't let him. There was something so compelling to me about him; I had the sense that he came from better things than this but that his fall had not debilitated him or made him as bitter as mine had made me.

"Where did you learn to cook like that?"

Hanwell was looking about him fearfully for whoever it was who was going to give him his next instruction. I had already guessed that he had the lowest job in the place, and a quick glance at the floor confirmed this. The toes of both his shoes were soaking wet.

"What, sir?"

"Don't call me sir. I've told you, it's Clive. Cooking—where did you learn?"

"Well, you pick up a bit here, a bit there, don't you," he said, reddening. "And I was in France in '44—I suppose that helped a bit."

"Were you? So was I. You must have been barely out of short trousers."

We exchanged ranks, regiments, places, and dates. He was fluent but not overly forthcoming. He had been a private, I a lieutenant. I asked him to sit down, but again he refused.

"Come on, now, one drink—won't kill you. I can square it with Franks, if he's still conscious. He owes me a favor. By the bye, do you know what those crêpes reminded me of? The French House—in London, in Soho. They have a starter just like that."

For the first time, Hanwell smiled at me, a coy operation that used only half of his mouth.

"Yes, I've eaten them there—I used to work in Soho. Dean Street."

"But what in God's name are you doing in this hellhole?"

Hanwell's face shut up shop for the day. His bulb nose ceased to shine, his eyelids sunk low.

"I should be getting back to work."

"Look, sit down, sit down, ten minutes—honestly, we'd like you to."

My girl smiled falsely, excused herself, and went to the bathroom. Hanwell sat. We talked of France a little, especially of Paris (I remember very clearly a funny phrase he used: "It was Paris that gave me a polish"), and discovered we were both East Anglians, he from dreary Ipswich, I from dreary Norwich—quieter, altogether less dramatic surroundings than we found ourselves in now. I realized we had both spent a training period in bleak Felixstowe before leaving for Normandy, though we had landed at the beach at different times. I am not averse to war stories and tried to push him for a little more, but Hanwell wouldn't have it.

"Different life," he said dully, and finally accepted a cigarillo from me.

In all my probing, I could not get from him what I wanted: a clear sense of his class. He could have been a butcher's son or a schoolteacher's son or even a civil servant's son—upon every topic he knew just enough to get by, veering away whenever he was in the slightest trouble. He was the kind of man who knew two things about every book you could mention, though he might never have held the book itself in his hands. Several times, one waiter or another came over to retrieve him, but I waved them off. No one could produce Franks, the real authority in the place, and there was only half an hour till closing. After a while, Hanwell relaxed and told a filthy story about a German brothel, all the time wearing that half smile, and ingratiating himself with my girl by answering her un-Catholic questions concerning what German whores wore and what their bedrooms looked liked and whether or not they reclined in chaise longues, an item of furniture she pronounced in as strange a manner as could be imagined. That Hanwell was more of a success with the girl than I was irritated me, but for some reason I took it out on her, not him. I began to tailor the conversation strictly to "men's business"—cars and the Bristol dog tracks and other subjects I had no real interest in. The girl fell into a deep sulk and finally left without me.

"She's a beauty," Hanwell said as we watched her go. "It makes me feel better, knowing there are women as beautiful as that in the world."

"Really. It makes me feel worse."

"It's like a signal . . . " Hanwell began, and said no more.

"What do you mean, a signal?"

"It's only a notion I have . . . stupid notion."

"No, go on—I didn't understand you."

"A signal that the world is good. Beautiful women help you know that."

I laughed out loud at this.

"Even if you can't bloody have them?"

"*Especially* then."

The band came to a clattering stop after playing something terribly fast in which the trumpet squealed like a train braking. Hanwell was pushing the wet butt of his cigarillo round and round a small china plate.

"You're an odd one, Hanwell," I said into the silence.

"I'm just an optimist," said Hanwell.

Just then, Hanwell was called away once and for all. Franks had finally roused himself in the kitchen and sent for him. I remember that it was only when he left the table that I realized Hanwell's glass of Chianti had barely been touched; the girl didn't drink; *I* must have drunk the whole bottle that was now sitting empty before me. I ordered a tumbler of water, drained it, and began discreetly to refill it with whiskey from my own flask. I dreaded going back to that awful flat. I sat and

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NICK DOWNES

"Jazzercise, Lido deck, 4 P.M."

• •

watched the night fold itself up around me, pack itself away. The double bass was zipped into its big black pajamas. The clarinet player delicately removed his reed and put it to bed in a swaddle of cotton. At some point I must have put my head on the table.

"Mr. Black? Mr. Black?"

Hanwell's hands were on my shoulders, gently shaking me.

"Mr. Black, we're closing now."

"Hanwell?"

"Yes, Mr. Black—Hanwell. You'll have to be going now, sir."

"It's Clive—how many times? What time is it, anyway?"

"It's one in the morning, Clive," said Hanwell solemnly, and I saw that his first instinct had been right—"sir" sounded so much more natural in his mouth.

Hanwell walked me to the door. We both took our coats and hats from the hooks in the hallway.

"You leaving, too?"

"I've got a home to go to," he said, a little defensively. "Just like anyone."

"What about a nightcap, Hanwell? Finish the night off properly. You had a great success tonight—we should celebrate. But maybe your wife wouldn't like it."

"My wife's in London."

"And mine's in Timbuktu. How about it, then?"

We agreed to go to his flat. I had some whiskey left and shared it with him, and for at least a minute the plan to continue the night seemed by far the best plan any man could have devised. We walked silently and contentedly down Park Street, but when we reached the bottom the rain began to come down sideways, and three minutes later I was soaked to the skin. We took a series of rapid rights and lefts; I remember registering the point at which I could no longer be sure that it would be quicker and less painful to go back to my flat than to go to Hanwell's.

"Have we much farther to go?" I asked him, blinking away water, trying to keep up with his swift pace.

"Just a bit," he said, and in the darkness I heard the squeak of a hinge. I followed him through the iron gate he had opened. We were in a small park, really just a green square, with beautiful Georgian properties looming white and expensive overhead.

"This is Cabot Square, very nice," said Hanwell. "It's a shortcut for me through the square. Imagine living with your family in one of these huge buggers."

I thought it very strange, that addition—"with your family." I hadn't the heart or the will to tell him that a house very like one of these "huge buggers" had recently been mine; that I had had the run of the place all for myself; that a life like that was possible.

"Barry Franks lives here," said Hanwell chirpily—he was as indefatigable as a tour guide—"with his wife and their four children."

"The way he's going, he'll be lucky to keep it," I said, too angrily. I wanted people to have the kind of bad luck I now knew existed. I didn't want anyone to think that what had happened to me could not happen to them. I wanted to spread my black gospel whenever I had the opportunity. But here was Hanwell, whistling at the house, in admiration of its owner's good fortune.

"Do you hear that?" he said. The rain had stopped; we were about to leave the park. A child, I thought, was crying in one of the houses.

"That's a fox," said Hanwell. "They scream that strange scream. It's very close by us."

He stopped and looked around. He pulled his hat low over his eyes, as if wishing to camouflage himself. Exasperated, I took off my own hat and tipped the water out of its brim. That must have been the last year I wore a hat in England. Certainly, even by the following year there wasn't a hat check left in any restaurant or public building in the country. People like Hanwell and me were the last dinosaurs as far as hats were concerned.

"Quiet a minute," said Hanwell as I opened my mouth to complain. Some lights went on in one of the grand houses across the way. I hated that subtle sign of concern and what it was meant to signal to the man outside: *I don't know what you're* *doing out there, but I am awake, and should I have to I will not hesitate to call the police.* When I had a house, I had the same smug habit. I well imagined the man peeling back his half of the bedcovers, pompously reassuring his wife, treading carefully on the stairs, proudly entering that great space he had worked so hard to own—his high-ceilinged living room—and peering out at these two dark figures in the square who might try to take it all away from him. When you lived where I lived now, when you heard the violent city noises, you didn't switch any lights on. I coughed loudly and lit another cigarillo.

"It's not moving away. Listen to it!" said Hanwell, slowly approaching a big, well-maintained hedge by the exit. It was a piteous wail, and its human shape was irresistible even after one told oneself it was a fox, even after Hanwell pushed the greenery away with a long stick to reveal the trembling fox itself, collapsed on its knees upon the ground.

"Pretty thing," I said, and I can remember now what a deliberate understatement that was. It was, in truth, extraordinary to be standing this close to something so wild, so usually elusive, so slender-legged, so orange-tailed, so yellow-eyed, so unexpected. We were face to snout with the animal.

"What's wrong with it?" I asked gruffly. "Why the bloody hell doesn't it move?"

Hanwell gently poked it with the stick; it wailed again, but it didn't stand.

"It must be maimed somehow," said Hanwell.

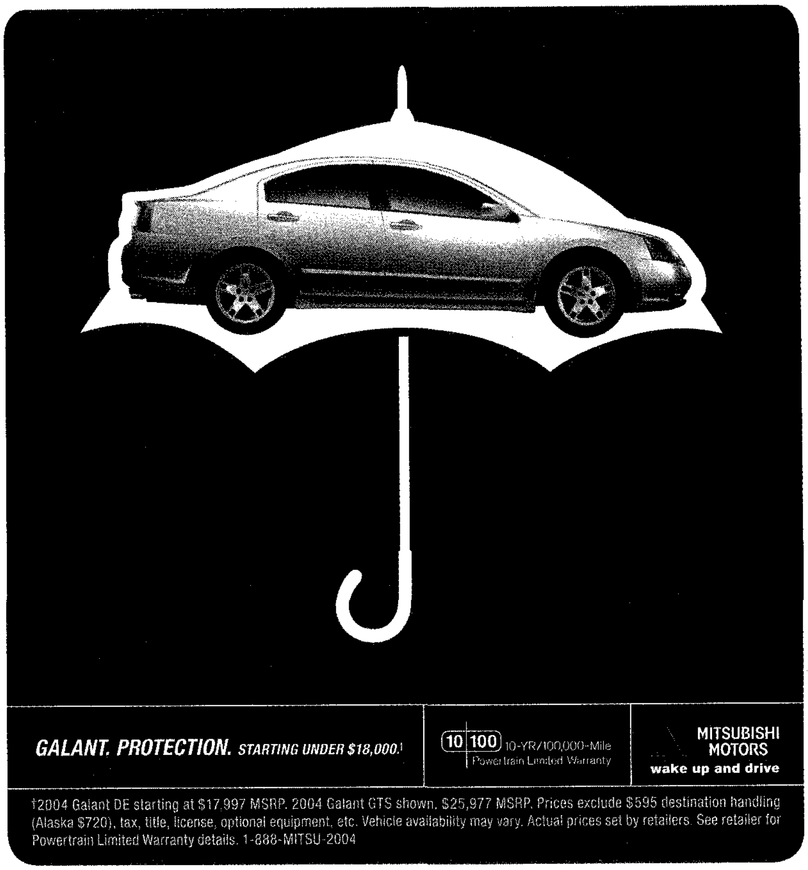
There wasn't a mark on it. It was as spotless as if it had been stuffed, and it was perfectly serene apart from this terrible screaming. From the lit house came the sound of a sash window being forced up. Hanwell put his wet boot on the fox's slim throat.

"What are you doing?" I said with alarm, and at the same moment Hanwell brought his boot down hard and broke its neck.

"Better to put it out of its misery," said Hanwell blandly.

Quite unexpectedly—for I am almost never sick—I turned around and threw up.

"Are you all right?" said Hanwell, although he did not make any move to help me. I thought, Men like us don't



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know how to comfort each other. We need women for that. I felt a little throb of despair pass through me; the absolute certainty that there would be no one waiting for me tonight, no matter what time I came home.

"Ridiculous of me," I said, straightening up. "I think maybe I should go home."

It was now that Hanwell left his fox and turned to me, his face full of distress.

"But we're almost there—"

"All the same," I said firmly, trying to clean myself up a little with a handkerchief, that other obsolete item, "I think my night is over."

"But—I'd hoped—" He bit his lip as he had in the restaurant, like a small child fearing a punishment.

"What? What had you hoped?"

I was angry with him now. It seemed as if all the failures of my evening were somehow connected to him—not getting the girl, losing the drink I had spent good money putting inside me, being wet, being cold—and if I could only get away from him my life would immediately begin to improve.

"I'd hoped you'd help me."

"If it's money you wanted, you can forget it. I'm poor as a church mouse," I said, and set off in the opposite direction. I'd barely taken a step when I slid on the wet paving stones. Hanwell broke the better part of my fall, but I still found that my will deserted me inches before the ground. I resisted Hanwell's help and instead gave myself to a shallow puddle, tinted orange in the street lights. I sat there quietly for a minute. I had the keen sense that this was the lowest moment of my decline, that there would be nothing beneath this. Time has proved that instinct correct. Two wet strangers, outdoors, without women, at night, and with death curled up nearby. Whenever I am in need of spiritual nourishment, I remember that moment and feel gratitude to God for never allowing me to fall so low again. Only a certain kind of man could find himself in such a situation. I am not that man anymore. The memory of what I was makes me shudder now, but at the time the only appropriate reaction was laughter. I laughed so loud that two more lights turned on in the square.

"I'm wearing this ribbon to help raise public awareness of my breasts."

"I suppose it is quite funny, Clive," said Hanwell, very sadly. I stopped laughing.

I looked up at the stranger with his hand on my shoulder. He had that same hopeful look on his face with which he had delivered the marvellous crêpes.

"I don't know you, Hanwell."

I examined his face—his prosaic Suffolk profile, the pouchy, boyish jaw—and I remember thinking, I'm wrong, we've met before, a thousand times. Men in England have looked like Hanwell since the days of King Raedwald; there are hundreds of Hanwells in that fearful mound in Sutton Hoo. It was impossible not to be reassured by this.

"No. That's true. But it's so nearby. You could get dry and then set off again in the morning."

"I haven't any money, you know."

"Don't insult me again," Hanwell said as firmly as any gentleman. I wondered whether this was a glimmer of the polish he'd picked up in Paris. And he hadn't lied: in a minute more we were climbing the lurid iron steps to his second-floor flat, every step wet and slick and heavy with the possibility of a lethal accident. Inside, the flat was no bigger than mine, but it was a good deal cleaner. At once, one noticed evidence of a previous, family existence. Pretty blue china plates hung above the doorway. Doilies seemed to cover all the limited surfaces, and on top of them stray ornaments were lined up, all too clearly snatched from a larger gathering of better examples. My eyes were drawn immediately to a large black-and-white photo pinned above the oven (which was in a corner of the lounge): three appealing dark-haired teen-age girls sitting on a bench. Of course, one of them—the prettiest, if I may say so—was you. As soon as he saw me looking at it, Hanwell plucked the photo from the wall. I had the impression he would have done this anyway, whether I'd looked or no. Hanwell offered his family to his guest in the same way most men would offer a drink. I smiled and nodded, but I was distracted by the dryness of my throat. I needed to be drunk so as to explain to myself why, in the middle of the night, I had decided to come to the flat of a man who washed dishes for the thugs at Barry Franks's place.

"That's Emily," said Hanwell, happily. "And that's Carol and that's Claire.

Claire's got all her mother's beauty, you can see that."

Having never seen your mother, I was at a loss as to how to continue this line of conversation.

"Very nice." I took my cigarillos out of my breast pocket. They were sodden and smelled of compost. "Any chance of a fag, Hanwell? And maybe a drink?"

"You see, the thing is," said Hanwell, quickly, "I was hoping you could do me a favor. It's a bit embarrassing."

"I'm beyond embarrassment, Hanwell, my friend. I'm sitting here begging you for a whiskey. Let's have a whiskey and then we'll deal with all other business in turn. I'm going to take my trousers off and put them on the radiator, if that's all right."

"It'll need a shilling for the meter," Hanwell said worriedly, in the tone of a Gypsy grandmother recalling a family curse, and disappeared out of the room for a minute with my trousers. To my enormous relief, he returned with a bottle of very good Irish malt. It was improbably good, and I asked him how he had come by it.

"Oh, you meet people who help you here and there," said Hanwell, pouring me out a measure.

"Do you? I don't seem to."

"It's only that you don't realize they're helping you. The heating's on now—your trousers'll be dry in a jiffy."

Hanwell stood up and began pottering around the room like a woman, straightening the meagre curtains, tidying away little things into drawers. I drank three shots, one after the other, and sat back in my chair. A small embroidered pillow connected softly with the back of my head. It was such an unlikely luxury that I let out an involuntary whimper of pleasure.

"Laura made that."

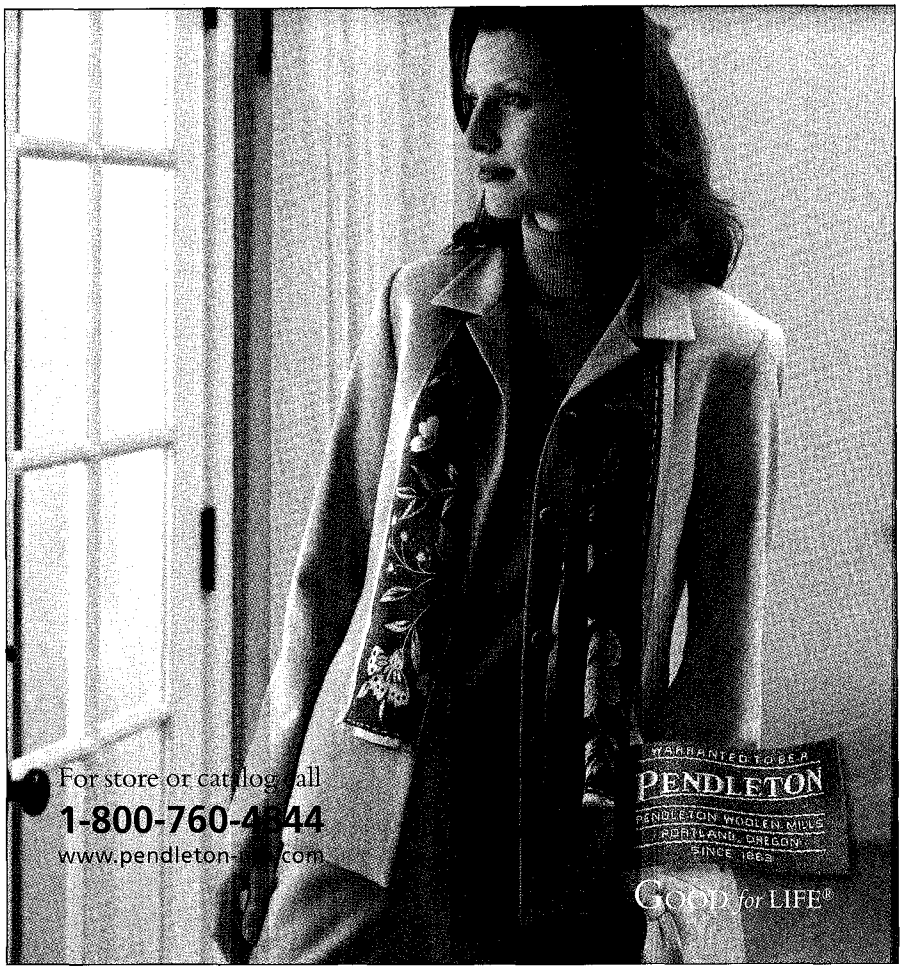
"Laura?"

"Laura, my wife."

"Ah. The one in London."

Hanwell nodded.

"And why isn't she with you again?" I asked. I realized that I knew nothing at all about Hanwell or why he was alone and washing dishes so late in his life. The greater part of it I never found out—until you told me. At the time, he offered only a painful series of incredibly delicate euphemisms, and it was



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a minute or so before I understood the sad truth.

"Did you find her?" I asked, unforgivably. When one is drunk, morbid curiosity is undisguisable. But Hanwell did not seem at all offended by it.

"She was in the stairwell on the way to the cellar," he said, matter-of-factly. "She'd hung herself with the wotsit you tie a bathrobe with, the cord. It was a terrible thing."

We were both quiet for a minute, considering death in the incompetent way that people do.

"But why did you tell me she was in London?"

"She is."

"I'm sorry, Hanwell. It *is* a terrible thing. Have another drink."

We didn't know each other; there was nothing else to say.

"Excuse me," said Hanwell. He left the room again. I remember drinking my drink and then another one, and letting my eye wander around this strange amalgamation of lounge and kitchen, with its junk-store furniture and filthy net curtains. Here and there one could spot the sad, cheap family heirlooms that were all a man like Hanwell could claim of his endless English ancestry. A jug and bowl, both painted with a sentimental swan, sat incongruously in the nook of the fireplace, reminding one of the Hanwells of the past who did their ablutions in their bedrooms for lack of a bathroom. Hung over the back of one chair was a stringy fur with the little feet still attached, the kind of thing women used to wear over their shoulders before the war. His wife's? His mother's? It made me think of Hanwell's fox again. I wondered what would put Hanwell out of his misery or what would put me out of mine. The next thing I remember is smelling turpentine. I stood up and moved to the door. I had no idea what the door led onto. For all I knew, Hanwell's flat bordered the edge of the world and by passing through this door I would simply fall into whatever hole contains forever. In fact, the door led directly to another room, no bigger than the room we had been in but stripped of decoration. All the furniture was piled in the middle of the room under a white dust sheet, like an obscene heap of bodies. The rest of the room was being painted a violent, hellish deep red by Hanwell, who was on a stepladder with a brush in his hand.

"I thought you'd fallen asleep," said Hanwell, seriously.

"Why would you think that?"

"I looked in. It looked like you were sleeping."

I had no watch on and no idea if this was true or not.

"Hanwell, what are you doing, for Christ's sake? It's two in the morning or something like it."

"This is the girls' room," said Hanwell, climbing down from his ladder, looking sheepish. "I mean, I hope it will be for them. I hoped you might help me, actually."

"Paint it? I suggest you hire a bloody painter, Hanwell—I came for a drink, not to be your skivvy."

"No—" said Hanwell, urgently, "not that. I wanted an opinion. Is it the right kind of yellow? I'm color-blind—I didn't like to ask the assistant—it's called Deepest Sun. I want them to wake up and feel that the place is always full of sunshine, you see."

"Yellow?"

"Don't tell me it's not right," he said, looking at me rather desperately. "This is all the paint I can afford at the moment. But there's that small pot left there—I'm going to do the skirting with that now. And the window frames. I want it to be just like sunset wall to wall, do you see? I think they blame me," he said suddenly, and sat down on the penultimate step of his little ladder. He was a ridiculous sight: weary and pink and softly weeping in this terrifying red box.

"It's nobody's fault, Hanwell."

He looked up at me curiously, as if we had just met.

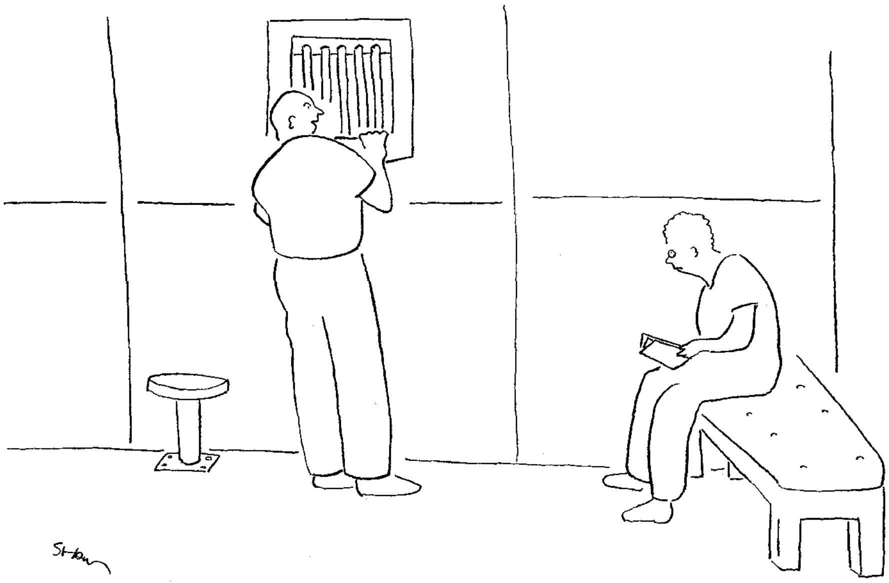
"No," he said finally. "That's true." He wiped his eyes. "It's a small room, though, for three girls that age."

"How old are they?"

"Seventeen, sixteen, and fourteen. They're with their uncle and aunt at the moment, in Bromley. I write, but they don't send back."

"Have you got another paintbrush, Hanwell?"

I went to work on the windows while Hanwell got on his knees for the skirting board. He was meticulous about it. He had a tiny brush for the corners and he went over the whole thing three times. By the time I'd done my second coat on the window frames, the real yellow sun



"So how long is your extended administrative leave?"

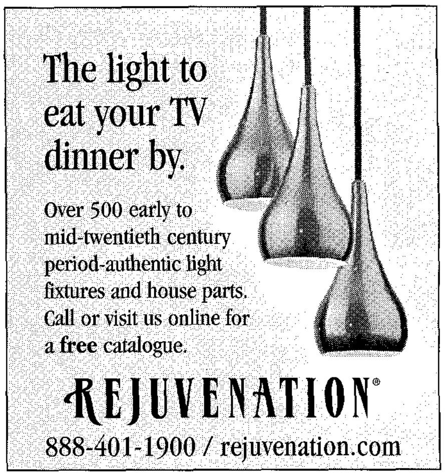
• •

was coming up. The red paint was so dark that it repelled the light, and though we could see the day beginning outside, inside the room it felt as though my night and Hanwell's would never end. I had passed through tiredness to the other side; I felt as if I needed no sleep at all. In my underwear I could have painted that window frame a thousand times if it meant not going back out into the world. I was happy, I think. At about 6 A.M., it was clear even to poor Hanwell's color-blind eyes that we could put no more red on the red wall. I stepped down from my ladder and brought in two more shots of whiskey. We sat on the floor and admired our handiwork. We had made a room for you and your sisters. It was a good feeling. It had been so long since I made anything at all.

"What will you do with them when they're here?" I asked Hanwell.

He spoke for a long time; he had elaborate plans. He imagined that you would be happy to hang around Franks in the daytime and watch him wash dishes, or maybe your sister would sing with the band, and when he couldn't keep an eye on you, you could spend time with Barry Franks's two odious sluttish daughters, whom I knew to be the girlfriends of two of the worst thugs in town. This was another piece of information I kept to myself.

"Are you sure they'll come, Hanwell?" I asked him when he'd finished outlining his strange ideas. He smiled broadly. I thought it extremely unlikely that any daughter of Hanwell's would ever spend a night in this room as we just had, but again I held my counsel. More and more, I suspect that men of our generation were not to be lived with. We made people unhappy because we ourselves were made unhappy in irrevocable ways. My own daughter takes great pleasure in knowing the measure of me, of judging and convicting me, and maybe she is right, and maybe you are, too. These days, everyone passes the blame backward—but we couldn't do that. We kept blame close, we held it tight. I'm sorry your father made you so unhappy. Maybe the other replies you receive will help you put the blame in the right place and "come to terms," as people say now. But when I saw your request in the paper my first thought was of a man likable enough to remember—this is no small feat. Almost everyone I met back then I'd rather forget. Even writing this I feel happy at the thought of Hanwell's prawn-and-mushroom crêpes and the care with which he touched up the skirting board. I think you are too hard on him. And I think you were wrong to think that he knew all the time you and your sisters wouldn't come, or that he didn't want you to. Hanwell had a beautiful way of hoping. Not many men can hope red yellow. ♦



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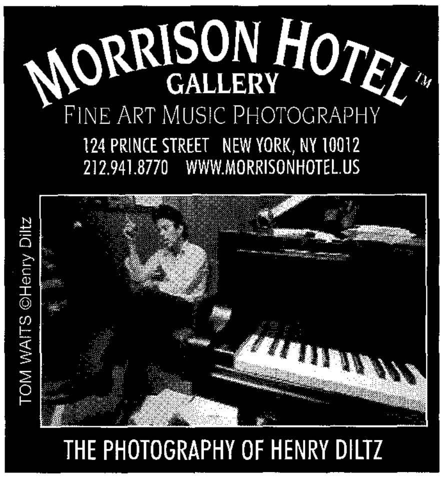

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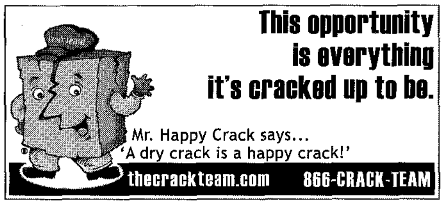

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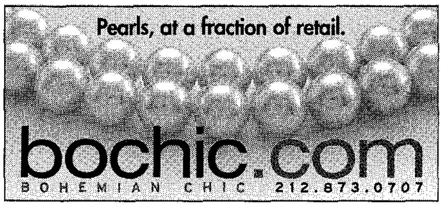

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PROFILES

THE CANDIDATE'S WIFE

Teresa Heinz Kerry is an uncharted element on the road to the White House.

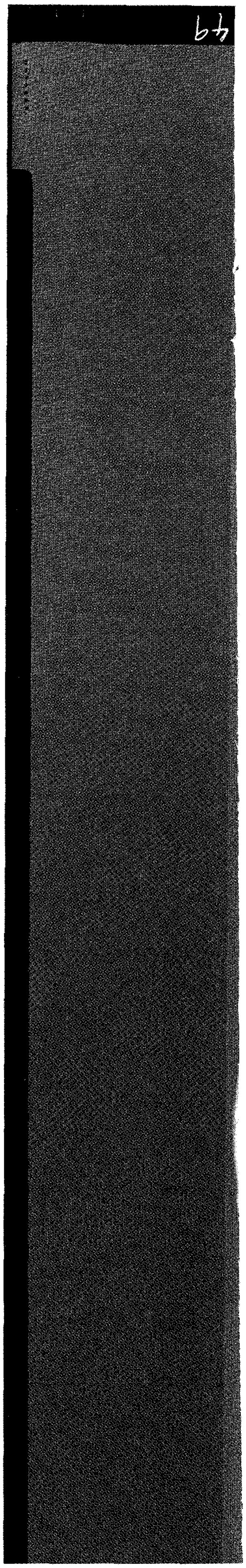
BY JUDITH THURMAN

The child of nature was a creature invented by the Romantics, whose cult of authenticity informed the literature of the next two hundred years. His direct descendant is the protagonist of countless modern films and novels: the prisoner of a false self revolting against the artifice of conventional narrative. On the face of it, Teresa Heinz Kerry makes an unlikely rebel. She is a sixty-five-year-old Catholic billionaire, born into the colonial society of Mozambique, whose tastes, pieties, and hobbies—cultivating roses and collecting still-lifes—are those of a traditional, if not Victorian, lady. But when she calls herself "a child of Africa" one can hear an echo of Rousseau, and it reverberates in the impulsive salvos (playful, caustic, or profane) for which she has been ridiculed as "bonkers" and "a loose cannon." The natural woman refuses to suppress her élan or subordinate her character to a role. "I don't want to lose myself," she said to me recently, "because if I do then I think my husband loses something, too."

Three years ago, when John Kerry was discussing a potential Presidential race with a small circle of advisers, his wife "blessed his decision and accepted it as a partner," a member of the group recalled. "She said she knew what was involved, but, to be fair, no one does, and any thinking human being would have qualms. She certainly made it clear that she would be her own person, and we wondered if she was going to be perceived as a breath of fresh air or as a threat; if her straight speaking would motivate voters—women in particular—or if we were going to spend the campaign watching our back, tensed for a blowup. We called it the Teresa factor."

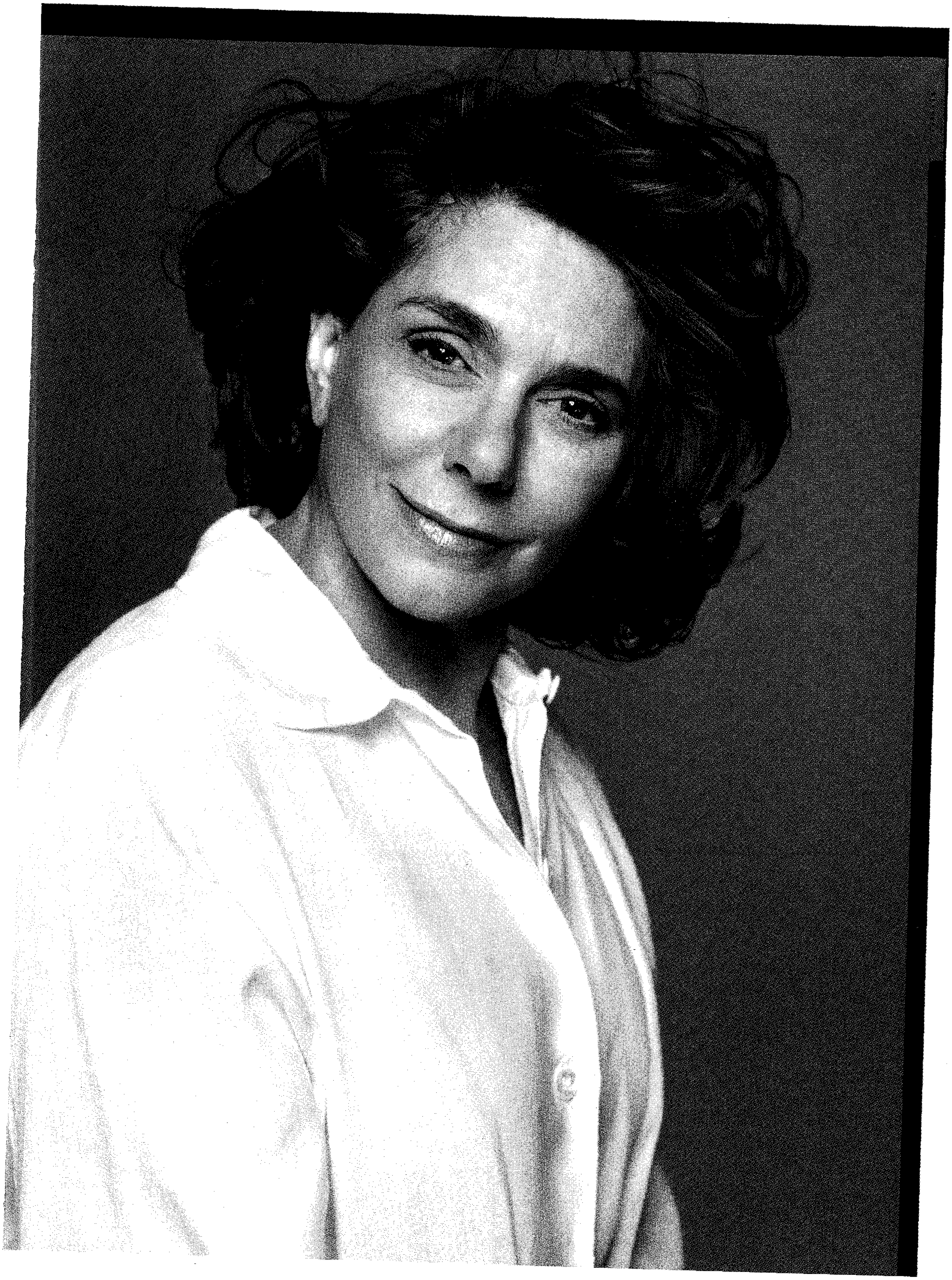
The role of First Lady is, in many respects, as archaically courtly as the title, and history suggests that a woman who plays it may be forgiven for weaknesses perceived as feminine—Betty Ford's depression, Jackie Kennedy's extravagance, Pat Nixon's fragility, Nancy Reagan's faith in astrology—but not for strengths perceived as manly. In a deeply pious country founded by Puritans, the spouse of a President is also, to some extent, the minister's wife. She commands sympathy and reverence only so long as her conduct is irreproachable or her husband's isn't. Though she is not ritually invested with the sins, evils, or ill luck of the tribe, she is nevertheless a scapegoat of sorts—a propitiatory figure saddled with the culture's burdensome ideals of wifely and maternal virtue.

Heinz Kerry has made a feminist issue of her entitlement to express herself, and if she were a man, she says, no one would denigrate her as "opinionated." She lectures knowledgeably on the inequities that confront women in the workplace and champions the excluded and discounted women of the Third World. One of the lucky charms that she wears on a necklace (another is a four-leaf clover that Kerry gave her one Valentine's Day) is a religious medal that her dying mother received from her confessor. He got it from Mother Teresa, who embodies the vocation for which Heinz Kerry would best like to be known—tireless caregiving. Her father, a Portuguese-born oncologist, had hoped that she would become a doctor, "and she kind of wanted to," a close friend, Wren Wirth, the wife of Tim Wirth, a former Democratic senator from Colorado, says, "though she wanted to get married



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Teresa Heinz Kerry, New York City, April 28, 2004.



and have children even more." At the height of the women's movement, in the nineteen-seventies, she was the stay-at-home mother of three little boys for whom, she says, she washed cloth diapers. She calls herself "a spokesman for women's ability to be at the center of the family."

But Heinz Kerry intends to be the first spouse of a President employed outside the White House (Hillary Clinton gave up her legal career when her husband was elected), and though she performs her share of the expected campaign chores—reading to toddlers and laying wreaths—some of her speeches and seminars on the hustings would not be out of place at Davos. They have focussed less on John Kerry's legislative achievements, human qualities, or political agenda than on her own eventful biography and the work of the Heinz Endowments, a charitable enterprise seeded by the family fortune of her first husband, H. John Heinz III, a Republican senator from Pennsylvania.

Many of the voters who come out to meet Heinz Kerry are middle-aged working women, chafing at constraints they have outgrown, and they applaud her defiance in breaking the mold of First Lady-like self-effacement. (Breaking molds is otherwise known as iconoclasm.) Kerry himself admires his wife's intellect and independence, he told me, and he seems to accept stoically, if not with relish, that she is "saucy." Even if he doesn't, "he wasn't blind," she says. "He knew what I would be like, what he was getting."

Nevertheless, recent approval ratings for the infallibly sunny and conventional Laura Bush, who is her husband's greatest booster, are vastly superior to Heinz Kerry's (seventy-two per cent, according to a poll taken by the Los Angeles *Times,* to thirty-five per cent). Even many Democrats admire Mrs. Bush. Americans in large numbers, regardless of their party, tell pollsters that they don't vote for a First Lady and that their opinions of Laura or Teresa won't influence their decision on Election Day, but the two wives have a significant influence on voters' perceptions of the candidates. Kerry's image is still sorely deficient in the warmth and human definition that Heinz Kerry herself possesses and might lend him. The adviser involved in Kerry's early strategy meetings told me that he is surprised by her reluctance "to trim the sails" of what he and others describe as a "self-referential" presentation that has often dwelled, at inopportune moments, on her memories of Heinz and on his legacy. "She made some stirring and lovely speeches, particularly during the primaries, when you thought, Goddam right, Teresa!" he said. But her habit of running on private rails rather than on the main line has dissipated some steam from the campaign. "It isn't as if there have been no specific conversations with Teresa about the necessity to fill in the picture," the adviser said. "John had a few himself, but he would ask others to convey the message." Perhaps, he reflected, she tends to reject criticism imperiously "because she's used to tremendous deference. When you have so much money, and give so much away, everyone, from governors on down, courts your approval. I think she sometimes has problems with a secondary role."

On the campaign trail with Heinz Kerry, I occasionally closed my eyes and concentrated on her diction and accent. She pronounces folksy locutions with upper-class British vowels, sultry Portuguese s's, and pizzicato t's. Her repartee is quick, with a Gallic tartness. Backstage at a fund-raiser in New York, she bantered with her son Andre, who recently moved to Pittsburgh from Stockholm, in perfect French and the convincing Swedish of a Bergman spoof. The Hispanic press in South Florida was disappointed, last spring, that she declined to be interviewed in Spanish, which she speaks fluently, though with the occasional Italian verb. She explained that it would take three weeks to get her vocabulary up to speed for a serious policy discussion, but that she would be happy to oblige the reporters with a little "chitchat."

Despite her linguistic prowess and her worldliness, Heinz Kerry has, at times, a deaf ear for the nuances of slang, code, condescension, and vulgarity in English—for the emotion of the language. "There are these bizarre moments that make you shudder," the Kerry adviser said. "Like calling herself African-American to black audiences." She dismissed voters skeptical of her husband's health-care proposals as "idiots," and, in a television interview with a Pittsburgh anchorwoman, employed the word "scumbags" to describe some of her detractors. I doubt that she knows the literal meaning of "scumbag," but perhaps, after forty years in America, nearly thirty of them as a political wife, observing how the flaws and contradictions of a personality as complex as hers are melted down for ammunition by the other side, she should have learned it. Close friends attribute her lapses of discretion to "naïveté." Heinz Kerry says that they are a form of resistance to enforced conformity. "I don't like to be told, for told's sake," how to behave, she says, "because I lived in a dictatorship for too long."

During Heinz Kerry's childhood, Mozambique—a colony of Portugal for some four hundred years—was ruled by the Fascist government of António Salazar. She hasn't been back to Mozambique since April of 1974, when she was thirty-five, and married to John Heinz. It has changed too drastically, she says, and she is afraid the experience would be distressing. On that visit, she took her three sons to see their grandparents. Christopher, the baby, was a year old, and his brothers, Andre and John, were four and seven. The family was scheduled to return to the United States on April 25th, but the borders were closed and the airport shut down. That day, Salazar's heir, Marcelo Caetano, had been ousted in a bloodless military coup. Its leaders were a cadre of young Army officers, many of whom had fought in their country's African wars and returned home—like some of their American contemporaries in Vietnam—radicalized by the destruction they had helped wreak. They pledged free elections, the restoration of civil liberties, and an end to colonialism.

When the news from Lisbon reached Lourenço Marques, the capital of Mozambique, stunned and ecstatic people took to the streets. Teresa Heinz and her father attended the first open meeting of FRELIMO (Frente da Libertação de Moçambique), which had been waging a guerrilla war of liberation for more than ten years, and they joined the vast throng of celebrants marching through the "cement town." (The expression, which refers to the European enclaves in Mozambique's urban centers, alludes to their solidity rather than to their ugliness. Most Africans lived in wretched shanties on the outskirts, which were known as "cane towns.") The parade took her up and down familiar, still well-kept avenues lined with jacaranda trees dripping pale blossoms, past the Museum of Natural History, next door to which her grandmother had lived, and past the colonial villa on the cliffs overlooking the Indian Ocean where she and her siblings grew up.

In the early months of Kerry's campaign, Heinz Kerry rarely gave a speech or an interview that wasn't redolent with nostalgia for the sensations of her childhood (the steamy vibrance of New Orleans reminded her of home, she said, as did the palm trees and tile roofs of Florida and the earthiness of Pittsburgh), and she continues to invoke what she sees as Africa's lessons about nature, race, freedom, dependence, and survival. When she urges Americans to exercise their right to vote, she likes to observe that her father was seventy-one when he cast his ballot in a free election for the first time.

Heinz Kerry's father moved back to Portugal with his wife after the Socialist regime of Samora Machel came to power in Mozambique, in 1975, and the country became independent. Machel nationalized private property. "My father wanted to die there," she told me with bitterness. "He didn't come to make money to take back to Portugal. He had nothing in Portugal." But, as crime rose and the economy crumbled, white nationalists who had supported FRELIMO felt, she said, increasingly embattled and marginalized. "The Portuguese colonials were not bad people compared to the crooks who took over," she told a reporter in Fort Lauderdale last March, and added that she could empathize with the Cuban exile community in South Florida because her parents had also "lost everything to the Communists."

Heinz Kerry was in Fort Lauderdale to address a group of women supporters at a luxurious faux hacienda on the intercoastal waterway. It was a hot morning, and on the opposite bank workmen building a new mansion had taken their shirts off, and were gawking and gesturing, none too politely, at the ladies milling on the terrace and in the garden. Some members of the construction crew had evidently gone to the trouble of lowering a scaffold from which to spray a graffito, about ten feet high, in red paint, on the side of the bulkhead: "Liberals Ruin U.S.A."

The guest of honor arrived late, as she tends to. Her staff tries to keep her to a tight schedule, but she says that she's "too old to be bossed around." As a speaker, she often gives more of herself than she is asked for, lingering in reception lines and becoming absorbed in an anecdote or the answer to a question. She speaks in an intent, unhurried fashion, and without notes. Her facts are hard and her command of them impressive, though her tone is whispery and caressing. Heinz Kerry describes herself as shy, and in the early months of the campaign she often hid in the corner of a stage, blushed at an introduction, covered her face, or did an awkward little pirouette of embarrassment before grabbing a mike with both hands and ad-libbing for an hour. Part of her reserve seems to be a reluctance to perform or emote on command. "My back goes up," she says. It also rises when she is asked questions that she considers demeaning, hostile, or intrusive, and she is, apparently, unaware that her provocative rebuffs encourage reporters to keep asking them. A friend in Washington who has known her well for decades sees her displays of intemperance as a function of anxiety. "When Teresa is calm and relaxed, in a small group, among supporters, or one on one, she is an utterly delightful human being: loving, funny, and kindhearted. Her friends adore her, and she's devoid of

ROADSIDE AMBUSH
FRIED CHICKEN
BARBEQUE
FRIED CATFISH

malice. But she's very spoiled, and it's not clear to her that in politics the attention—which she likes—comes with heat."

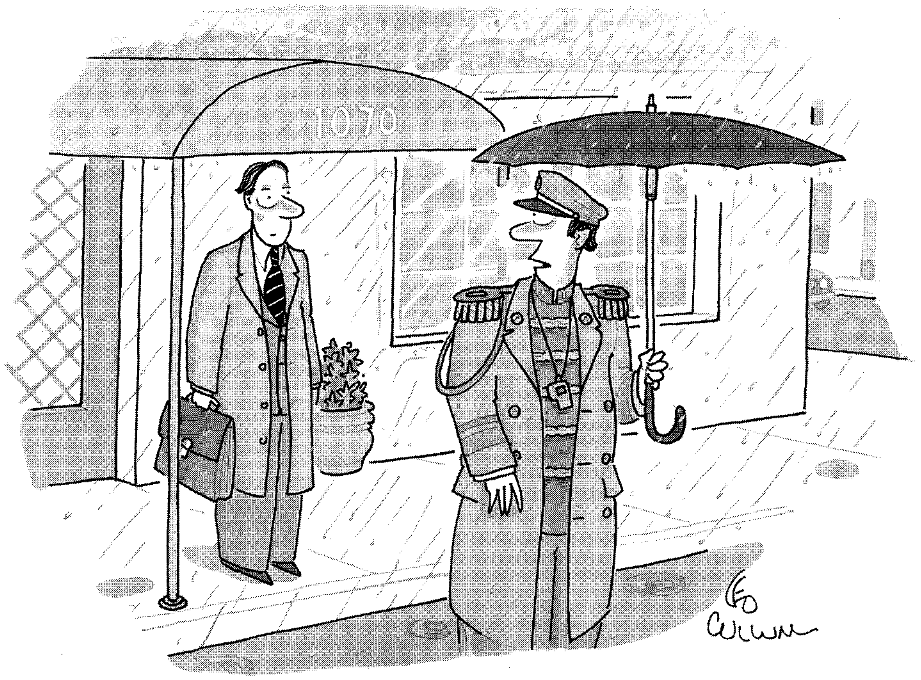
Heinz Kerry has an unlined complexion, elegant gestures that punctuate her speech, and the well-tended simmer of a retired Latin film star. Her dark eyes are widely set and, like her temper, have an emphatic flash. She dresses with expensive understatement, however. A consultant versed in the semiotics of campaign style may have suggested the bright-red ensemble that she wore to the Democratic Convention (red is said to telegraph sentimental warmth to women voters), but throughout the spring she travelled in the same three or four black, taupe, or beige designer suits. She accessorized her outfits with a misshapen straw hat; prescription sunglasses; a cardigan; Chanel boots; a large diamond ring; a Hermès satchel; a rhinestone campaign pin and a polyester scarf with a print of Kerry's initials that she helped design; and her necklace of charms. In the name of truth-telling, but also because she enjoys the incredulity of younger people when they hear that she is sixty-five, she makes a point of mentioning her age and the fact that she is married to a man five years her junior. She says that she would like to be a model for older women who feel sexually disenfranchised, and to "liberate them from the feeling that they die as women" when their youth is gone.

It should be said that Heinz Kerry is routinely cornier and more cordial than she is high-handed or inflammatory. (One of her favorite adages is "Put your arms around the problem, and it begins to get solved.") But she sometimes seems bored when others speak. On camera, her tinted reading glasses make her look aloof. At a rally one evening in Chicago's Union Station, wearing a low-cut white blouse and a black suit, she projected—while Kerry spoke—the languor of a *maja*. On other occasions, she took slugs from a water bottle, frowned, slumped, scribbled a note, fiddled with her rings and hair, or whispered to someone on the dais.

Heinz Kerry brightens visibly, however, when her husband sounds his call for ending America's moral, economic, and diplomatic "isolation." Kati Marton, the author of "Hidden Power," a study of modern Presidential couples (her husband, Richard Holbrooke, advises Kerry on foreign policy), believes that, whatever her liabilities as a candidate's wife, "Teresa would be an enormous asset" as the country's second foreign-born First Lady. (Her only predecessor would be Mrs. John Quincy Adams, née Louisa Catherine Johnson, and in some senses she shouldn't count. Adams's mother was English, but her father was an American living in London, who became the United States consul there after the Revolution.) "At a time in American history when we have alienated so much of the world, Teresa, with her languages and her cultivation, could perform a real service as an envoy in a way that Jackie Kennedy or Hillary did," Marton says.

An envoy is a stand-in, however, and Heinz Kerry seems to prefer her own ground. She defines her role in the campaign, or the one she feels best equipped to play, as "helping people to connect the dots—that's what I like to do," she says. "For instance, during the Iowa primaries, I was talking with small farmers and environmentalists about pesticides, aquifers, the big Ag subsidies, and what they are doing. And it so happened that the W.T.O. was meeting, and I read that the Zimbabweans had walked out, because they could no longer afford to sell their corn and compete with the American farmers subsidized by the big Ags. So I talked about it, and they got very excited to learn that what was an inequity to them was an inequity to poor people elsewhere. That is what a globalized world really does. And then I talked about AIDS and SARS, and aspects of trade or foreign policy, and I tied it up to terrorism and how you fight it—by having the best intelligence, and investing in our firefighters, our police, our C.D.C., and epidemiology. And maybe also in a new special force at home, but, most important, in teaching languages, knowing the countries, and forging real friendships with the world, so we can get the information ahead of trouble. You know, Americans are smart, but they only know what they see and hear. How many read op-ed pages?" She would like to make a weekly broadcast, "perhaps on C-SPAN, talking and listening and feeling part of making people's lives better."

In her eagerness to connect the dots for people, Heinz Kerry sometimes fails to appreciate that, beyond the Beltway, many voters have no idea what she means by "Kyoto," "the big Ag subsidies," "the W.T.O.," and "the C.D.C.," or by "Socratic dialogue" and "thinking in silos"—two of her catchphrases. The students at Bethune-Cookman College, in Daytona Beach, half of them male



"You need a cab? You're after me."

"Look—how many times do I have to tell you telemarketers to leave me alone?"

• •

and most of them under twenty-one, listened politely but with glazed expressions to a digression about hormone-replacement therapy for the symptoms of menopause.

A few days before Heinz Kerry acquired a Secret Service detail, in April, she was mixing a grog for an ailing journalist (she is full of remedies and medical advice, some of it holistic or homeopathic) and lamenting the imminent end of her life "in the normal world." Despite her belief that her wealth doesn't or shouldn't define her, many Americans find it difficult to imagine that a woman as rich as Heinz Kerry lives in the normal world. They expect a grande dame in the mode of Mrs. Astor, with white gloves, if not of Alexis Carrington, with scarlet claws, and when they meet her in person, at a rally or on a rope line, they are often disarmed by her lack of affectation. "She talks too long," Jane Bell, who does market research in Des Moines, said to me after a campaign event, "and in that sense she's worse than he is. But she comes across as genuine and very bright and deeply compassionate. It's not her fault that she has all that money. I like it that she hasn't started baking cookies. And that African childhood is a terrific asset."

Maria Teresa Thierstein Simões-Ferreira Heinz Kerry was born in Lourenço Marques on October 5, 1938. She describes herself as "the dull one" of three siblings, "the easy middle one. My mom used to say I never gave them one day of worry." Her sister and brother "were supremely intelligent, particularly my sister," she says. "On the other hand, I got better grades than they did, because I applied myself." Her brother, the oldest child, earned a degree from Cambridge, and her sister—so incongruously fair in a dark family that she was nicknamed *bebê inglês*—died in a car crash at nineteen.

The Simões-Ferreira family produced some of Lisbon's most distinguished lawyers and judges (and also a poet, Heinz Kerry recalled, who was "crazy as a loon," and a friend of Sartre's), so her father's choice of a career in medicine was, from his parents' point of view, mildly heretical. He emigrated to Mozambique about the time Salazar seized power, and, having married a young woman from Lourenço Marques's cliquish British colony, set up a practice in Manjacaze, northeast of the capital—an inland village that was a center of cashew-nut cultivation.

Andre Heinz describes his maternal grandmother, Irene Thierstein, as a Mediterranean matriarch of the old school. "She was sweetness incarnate," Heinz Kerry's friend Wren Wirth says, "and very firm about her faith." Thierstein was born in Mozambique to a couple who had immigrated from South Africa at the time of the Boer War. Her father was the scion of a Swiss-German family living on Malta, and her mother was the half-French, half-Italian daughter of an Alexandrian shipowner who traded with Russia during the Crimean War.

When Heinz Kerry's mother was pregnant with her first child, she contracted a kidney ailment in Manjacaze and nearly died. The family returned to Europe for a few years so that she could regain her health and her husband could study a second specialty—radiology. Thereafter, they gave up the notion of living dangerously and settled in the capital, where Simões-Ferreira opened an oncology clinic. His children had a modern urban childhood that included movies, pop music, and dating. "My life was idyllic," Heinz Kerry says, "but more modern than Isak Dinesen's."

On weekends and holidays, the family stayed at a cottage overlooking the Uembje lagoon, in Bilene, a hundred miles north of the capital. There were masses of flamingos in the saline pools near the shore, and a landscape of verdant brush and white dunes. Though Heinz Kerry describes the region as "bush" (her memories of underdevelopment have a colonial flavor), it was already becoming a beach resort. But at five o'clock on Saturday mornings her father went to work in an informal clinic under the pergola in their garden. Teresa helped him make rounds—an experience that she recounts regularly to voters. The patients were desperately poor peasants living in wattle huts who had no other access to medical care. Infant mortality was then about thirty per cent, though it often took the mothers two years, she says, to overcome their fears and bring their children for treatment. Because so few rural Africans spoke Portuguese, it was difficult to communicate. Teresa's father compiled a handwritten dictionary of Ronga, a local language, that she inherited and keeps by her bedside.

Heinz Kerry insists that even though she possesses a great fortune and its attendant perquisites, including the private jet in which she campaigns—a Gulfstream II—she could be "perfectly happy" living under a thatched roof. She also likes to say that "my Africa preserved the innocence of children." But the insouciant egotism of privilege is its own form of innocence. Though the stamp on her Portuguese identity card categorized her, she tells voters, as "a second-class citizen," her parentage entitled her to a first-class life. "There was a natural apartheid in Mozambique," she says, one that was economic and social, not legalized. "There were not that many Africans going to high school yet, or who would go to a movie, or who would do some of the things that we did, but my little school did have some mulatto girls."

When she was fourteen, Teresa was sent to a Catholic boarding school in Durban, where she was one of three foreigners and barely understood a word. Her English was still elementary, but, by working with her habitual application, she "got the hang of it." She won prizes for French and music, but she missed her own piano. "I wanted to become a concert pianist," she told me, but the music teacher crushed her hopes for a career, pointing out that her hands would always be too small to make an octave. "I felt so gypped," she said. "I never had another piano lesson."

After graduating at the top of her class, Teresa enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg—the "Oxford of South Africa"—at a moment of heady, though not yet revolutionary, intellectual and social ferment that would shortly be suppressed. She majored in Romance languages, and she says that she especially loved seventeenth- and eighteenth-century history and French theatre. She took classes in political science, which helped shape her rosy first impressions of America. Those textbook outlines of democracy were colored in by the Hollywood movies of the period. "I really admired a country that produced the Bill of Rights and 'Some Like It Hot,' " she often says.

In April of 1959, despite her mother's disapproval, Teresa joined her classmates and professors in an unprecedented, prominently reported demonstration of unity (the protesters wore academic robes) against a law that would extend apartheid to the few institutions of higher education that were still integrated—including their own. The legislation passed that June, nine months before the Sharpeville massacre. Some of her friends eventually went to jail, Heinz Kerry says, but the protests of 1959 were peaceful by the standards of what was to come. She left for Europe after she graduated, and enrolled at the Interpreters' School at the University of Geneva. John Heinz—the heir to the eponymous condiment fortune—was taking a year off from the Harvard Business School to work at a Swiss bank, and they met on a tennis court.

CITIES OF THE PLAIN

After he vaporized the pleasure gardens,
the temples of Luck and Mirrors, the striped
tents of the fortune-tellers,
after he'd rained down sulfur
on the turquoise baths, the peacock market,
the street of painted boys,
obliterated the city, with all its people,
down to the last stray cat and curious stink,
he missed them. Killing them
made him want to kill them again—

how cleverly they'd escaped him,
hiding in corners and laughing,
just out of sight!

Being God, he would not permit himself regrets.
There would be other cities, just as wicked.
But none like Sodom, none like Gomorrah.
Probably he has been angry ever since—
angry and lonely.

—*Katha Pollitt*

Heinz, the only child of divorced parents, had been sent to boarding school at a tender age. His old friend David Garth (who was a media strategist for Heinz's five successful runs for Congress—two for the House and three for the Senate) suggests that he suffered in his relations with an overbearing father. The Heinz patrimony traditionally helped underwrite the cultural life of Pittsburgh, where the company has its corporate headquarters in a high-rise on one side of the Allegheny River and its old factory—an industrial landmark of sooty brick, crowned by a smokestack and an enormous neon ketchup bottle—on the other. The Steelers play at Heinz Field, and a walking tour of the city's cultural district, once a combat zone of peep shows, adult book shops, and flophouses, gives one a sense both of the family's munificence and of its mystique. According to Janet Sarbaugh, who directs the arts and culture programs at the Heinz Endowments, the formidable father-in-law of "Mrs. Heinz," as she is still known to her staff, bought up many of the derelict properties and "spearheaded their transformation." Among the benefactions that Pittsburgh owes, wholly or in part, to the dynasty of which Heinz Kerry is now what Wren Wirth calls "the Regent" are Heinz Hall, a Jazz Age movie palace restored to its period opulence; the even larger Benedum Center, home of the Pittsburgh Ballet and the Pittsburgh Opera; a modern sculpture garden with works by Dan Kiley and Louise Bourgeois; a public theatre designed by Michael Graves; the handsomely landscaped riverfront; and numerous buildings at the university, including the Heinz Memorial Chapel.

"I felt sympathy for this girl from Lourenço Marques," David Garth said. He was referring to the daunting prospect of entering Pittsburgh society—a clannish oligarchy of banking and steel magnates—like the common-born upstart from a distant tropic who captivates an heir to the realm. Garth met Teresa Simões-Ferreira in New York in 1964, and was smitten with her. "John and I were a couple of bachelor jerks," he said. "And I had never heard him serious about anybody else." Garth had also never met a woman as unawed by the manly virtues and material comforts that made Heinz "one of the ultra catches in the country," as he put it. "Teresa was not a rollover, and I liked that about her. She was very independent. When you met the two of them early on, she was the one who struck you as the natural politician. She was always concerned with issues—as a Senate wife, she took up the plight of Soviet Jewry, among other things—and she follows through. You don't make an idle remark to her and think it will be lost. She has always been—I hate the word—genuine. She doesn't watch what she says, but I've been involved with politics at what I consider a fairly high level for most of my life, and I've never seen anybody worth a damn who didn't have her attitude."

Heinz Kerry describes herself as an immigrant and makes common cause with other naturalized citizens striving toward the American dream. She spent her first year in this country living in a town-house apartment on East Eighty-first Street, near the Metropolitan Museum, deciding whether or not she could adjust to American life. Her future with Heinz hinged on the decision. The relentless pace and rudeness of New York overwhelmed her. But she had landed a job at the United Nations. She worked for the Trusteeship Council, "which doesn't exist anymore," she noted, translating and analyzing information on colonial economic activities, and tracking the progress of decolonialization. The job brought her into occasional contact with her countryman Eduardo Mondlane, the founder of FRELIMO. He worked at the Secretariat when he wasn't leading the nascent revolution in Mozambique. Mondlane encouraged her research, and they reminisced about home. She was moved to hear him say that her father had made an impression on him as a boy in Manjacaze, where he was born.

Heinz Kerry's stint at the United Nations gave her her first taste of political disillusionment. "I remember sitting in the Security Council with Mondlane, a few years before he was assassinated"—he was killed in 1969—"and they were fighting and carrying on about colonies," she recalled. He listened to the empty Cold War rhetoric for a while, then said to her, in a weary voice, "It's like watching a soccer match." She realized that "the truth was irrelevant," and "all my hard work—the facts I was searching for—meant nothing." Her experience at the U.N., she told a Brazilian journalist in Fort Lauderdale, was a "*banho*"—a bath, or, perhaps more fittingly, a baptismal immersion—"*de realpolitik*."

Heinz was an Episcopalian, but Catholicism, Heinz Kerry says, "is part of me, you know—part of who I am." Even in the late fifties, her piety impressed her contemporaries as anachronistic. A Heinz family member describes Teresa as "straitlaced" and uses the word "romanticism" to characterize her feelings for the Church: "When she was a young woman, her ideas were mystical and half-baked, but they've gotten much clearer." From the perspective of an orthodox Catholic like her mother, however, Heinz Kerry's position on reproductive rights qualifies as sinful. In her early twenties, she ended an otherwise congenial romance when her suitor admitted that if he ever had to choose between saving her life and that of an unborn child he would, without hesitation, follow Church doctrine and let her die. She also had the courage—or impertinence, depending on one's point of view—to tell Bishop Wright of Pittsburgh, in a pastoral interview that took place shortly before he presided at her wedding, that she "wanted lots of children" but that she didn't believe in the Church's views on contraception. "You wouldn't talk about abortion in those days—you didn't think about it," she said to me. But, years later, after the birth of her three sons, she was prepared to abort a pregnancy severely compromised by high doses of a steroid medication. A miscarriage spared her from a choice that, despite her ambivalence on the subject—abortion, she says, is a "terrible thing," and anyone who treats it lightly is heartless—she feels all women should be free to make.

The wedding of John Heinz and Teresa Simões-Ferreira took place in February of 1966, at the Heinz Memorial Chapel. A blizzard had dumped five feet of snow on the city, and the bride "cried every week" thereafter through the first year of her new life. Her husband was commuting from long hours at the family company to their farmhouse on ninety acres in the fashionable suburb of Fox Chapel, and she was homesick and lonely. "But then," she told me, "you have a baby, and things start becoming a unit, and you grow up. I grew up with a guy. Who I was in love

"For those of you who don't know Mr. Ingham—he's our institutional memory."

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MEA CULPA
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with. Who made me a woman, you know? Mother of his children. And an American."

Happy marriages seem to be as rare in contemporary politics as they are in modern fiction, though the Heinzes, according to their friends, had one. "Their closeness was something you don't see if you've done as many campaigns as I have, and seen as many disenchanted couples," Garth said. The Heinz family member noted, however, that John Heinz could be difficult and dogmatic, and that, while Teresa was always "feisty," and their tugs-of-war had a "flirtatious" tension, she lived in the shadow of his authority. "He was very tough, and he ran the show. He had the money and she didn't," a friend in Washington said. His son Chris describes him simply as "the boss."

Chris is dark, muscular, and good-natured, with his father's chiselled features. He graduated from business school three years ago and worked briefly in private banking before quitting his job to campaign for Kerry, whose steadiness, he said, supplies ballast to an "emotional family." His oldest brother, John, sanctions no intrusions into his privacy. He began working with inner-city children while he was at Boston College, and became a Buddhist. At an alternative Buddhist school that he co-founded, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, he teaches troubled adolescents and reproduces medieval tools and armor on a blacksmith's forge. His wife is a doctor, and their daughter is Heinz Kerry's only grandchild.

Andre—a polyglot like his mother—is a consultant to businesses interested in sustainable development. He jokes that his first name destined him to be the European in the family. His coloring is Iberian, and an excellent tailor and beautiful manners that are reserved without being stiff contribute to his patrician air. When I met him at a gala in New York in April, he seemed unnerved to have been swept into his mother and stepfather's court of bodyguards, staffers, volunteers, and press. "It was all a bit surreal," he said. "We are kind of a private family." He calls Kerry his mother's "kindred spirit," though he adds that, while "John has a lot going on upstairs—he is thinking all the time, parallel processing—Mom is very intuitive. At the end of the day, she listens to her gut, and that's why she is such a conundrum."

Heinz Kerry described herself to the students in Daytona Beach as a "strict, bossy, witchy mother." Her sons were forbidden to eat junk food and were restricted to thirty minutes or, at most, an hour of television a week, after which they had to write a brief report explaining why they liked the program they had chosen. "So we spent our time figuring out how to watch TV and eat junk food," Andre said. "Mom could be terrifying," he added, affectionately. "She was like concentrated juice: strong-willed, outspoken—a tour de force."

The principal reason that Heinz Kerry balked at releasing her tax returns, she says, was to protect her sons' privacy (they have complex joint trusts). John was apparently the least willing to condone the exposure. She says she initially believed that the political uproar about her taxes was just "noise from the right," but when the noise became a general uproar she grudgingly produced a summary of her 2003 income—$5.1 million—and the effective tax she paid on it, about eleven per cent.

On April 4, 1991, John Heinz and six others, including two children, died in a collision of his chartered plane with a helicopter over a schoolyard in suburban Philadelphia. Shortly before he was killed, he and his wife had been discussing ways to find financial support for an interdisciplinary research center at the Environmental Defense Fund, of which Heinz Kerry was a vice-chairman. "I was in despair about it," she told me. "And he said, 'Don't worry, you are a very wise person, it will be O.K.' Those were his last words, and they helped me later on. Because it wasn't something he'd ever told me—that I was wise." For a long time, she was devastated by his death, to the point of paralysis.

In addition to around half a billion dollars—which, by the most recent estimates, has since doubled—Heinz left his widow their farm, Rosemont; a brick town house in Georgetown; a fifteenth-century barn reconstructed beside a river in Sun Valley, Idaho; a beach compound on Nantucket; and one of the finest collections of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish art in private hands. David Garth and others, including Arlen Specter, the senior senator from Pennsylvania and, like Heinz, a Republican who was willing, on occasion, to cross the aisle, urged her to run for her husband's seat, which is now filled by Rick Santorum—an outspokenly conservative politician whom Heinz Kerry once called "a Forrest Gump with attitude." Heinz Kerry was a registered Republican of the Rockefeller school until 2002, and she hasn't altered her views in any essential way. When she changed her affiliation, it wasn't for Kerry's sake, she says, but because she felt alienated by the increasingly strident, divisive rhetoric of the Republican Party. She found the tactics that the Republicans used to defeat Max Cleland, the Democratic senator from Georgia, who lost three limbs in Vietnam, "unscrupulous and disgusting." Cleland was accused of being "soft" on homeland security, and the conservative commentator Ann Coulter claimed that he had caused his own mutilations by mishandling a grenade. "What does the Republican Party need?" Heinz Kerry asked in a CBS television interview. "A fourth limb to make a person a hero?"

Having survived the abrupt and violent losses of both her husband and her sister—two "comets," as Heinz Kerry put it, whose brilliance had always eclipsed her—she felt that she had, in middle age, been given a belated chance to test her mettle and achieve her own prominence. She chose to do so in philanthropy rather than in politics. Grant Oliphant, John Heinz's former press secretary, who is now the associate director of the Endowments, gave me a tour of Heinz Kerry's offices. They are laid out like a village street in some imaginary Southwestern town, and decorated with Early American folk art and artifacts, including a tattered flag with thirteen stars; a cigar-store Indian; and a statue of Uncle Sam from Coney Island. The exotic trees that supplied the wood came from sustainable plantations. In Heinz Kerry's opulently spacious private aerie, a wall of glass opens onto a terrace with sweeping views of the Pittsburgh riverfront that she has helped revitalize. What was once one of America's most polluted cities is now, according to Heinz Kerry, one of its cleanest, in part because of her environmental leadership. Like the new convention center several blocks away, for which she sponsored a design contest, the offices are so scrupulously "green" that one can, in theory, eat the carpets.

The Endowments' assets—about $1.3 billion—generate between sixty and seventy million dollars a year, which, Oliphant says, "is distributed to an array of progressive, mostly environmental causes, but also to programs that are faith-based and conservative, such as charter and Catholic schools in the inner city, and organizations that teach parenting skills." Still, he says, "the Endowments have been under attack for months by right-wing groups attempting to cast Teresa's philanthropy as extremist and left-wing." The attacks—which have been discredited as baseless smears by political fact-checkers at the Annenberg Public Policy Center—include assertions that Heinz Kerry helped to "launder" charitable contributions and that she gave money to a foundation with links to Hamas. (The editor whom Heinz Kerry told to "shove it" on the eve of her Convention speech works for the conservative Pittsburgh *Tribune-Review*, which aired some of the accusations uncritically.) The donations in question were a decade's worth of support for the Tides Center and Foundation, and were earmarked for specific environmental projects in Pennsylvania and for youth and economic-opportunity programs. Tides also funds antiwar, civil-rights, and pro-choice organizations, but demonstrably not with any Heinz money. "It's crazy," Oliphant says, "because she isn't an ideologue—she's a pragmatist, and she thinks from the middle."

Heinz Kerry broadened the Endowments' scope and changed their philanthropic style. They still provide funding for the arts, but they also support a range of experimental initiatives in toxic-waste cleanup; community mental health; early-childhood development; preventive medicine; pensions for homemakers; prescription drugs for seniors; and education. "It's the difference between old-fashioned patronage and investment," Janet Sarbaugh said. The Endowments' strategically targeted grants are accompanied by tight fiscal oversight, and recipients lose their support, as the Pittsburgh public-school system did, if they don't meet high expectations of performance. "Rather than set ourselves up as white knights whose generosity and intercessions will save the world," Heinz Kerry wrote in the Fall 2002 issue of *H*, the Endowments' quarterly, "we need to think of ourselves as partners in the rough-and-tumble enterprise of social change."

John Kerry, like his wife, can be prickly about her immense wealth and its influence. "Yes, she has money," he told me, "but the money is irrelevant to who she is and how she defines herself." (He tends to take questions like an aggressive steeplechase rider on a testy stallion: forward in the saddle and wary of the hidden trap.) Kerry doesn't see any impropriety in a First Lady funding and directing her own "policy lab." "That's the world she loves," he said, though he claims that she will also find time "to do what First Ladies have done historically," which is to adopt a cause. When a reporter in Baltimore asked her what that cause might be, she answered coolly, "I don't think of my work as *causes*—I think of it as work."

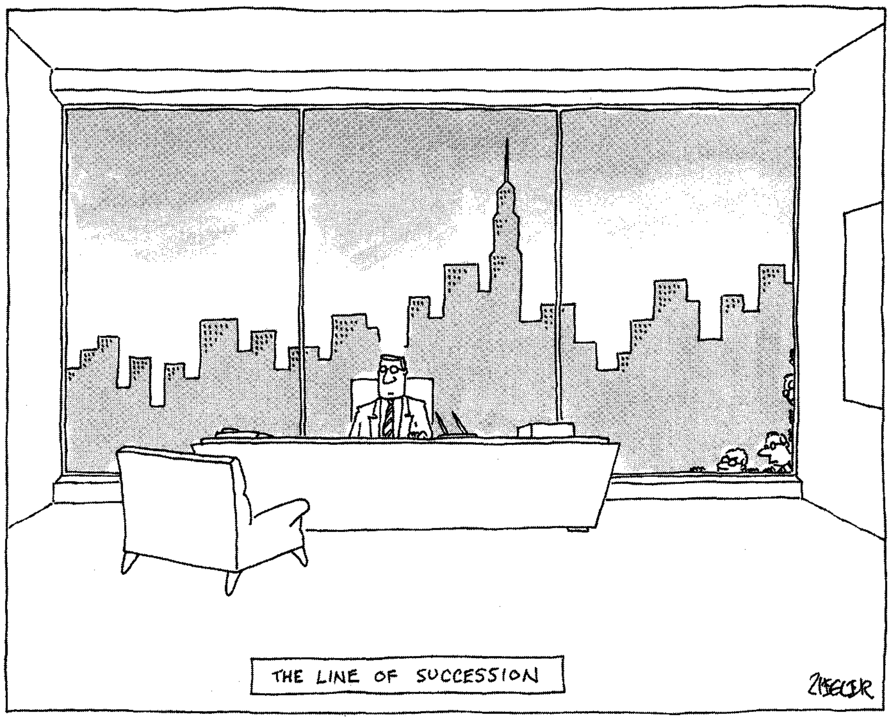
Though Heinz Kerry likes to attribute what critics see as impolitic behavior to her experience of tyranny, she lived with an ambitious politician of lordly ways longer than she ever lived under a dictatorship. At the surprise party that Heinz organized for her fiftieth birthday, she, in turn, surprised the guests by telling them that she had "paid my dues and I wasn't going to put up with any more stuff I don't want to. *Finito*. It was the most liberating thing in the world." Heinz was considering a Presidential bid at the time of his death, and his wife hated the idea. She told him that he would have to run "over my dead body." I asked her why she had changed her mind this time. Two years ago, she replied, she began to have "a feeling of urgency about what's going on in the world, and at my age it seemed a little selfish" to stand in Kerry's way. She thought the matter over on a long hike, and decided that "I shouldn't stop him. I should help him. And so I did."

Teresa Heinz met John Kerry in Washington, D.C., on Earth Day, 1990. He was speaking at a rally on the Mall, and she had come with her first husband, who was also scheduled to address the crowd. Both senators sat on the banking committee, and they were collegial acquaintances. While they were waiting to speak, Heinz introduced his wife to the gentleman from Massachusetts. By the time Kerry met Teresa Heinz again—in Brazil in 1992—she had been widowed. They were both delegates to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Kerry was impressed when she took over from a Brazilian interpreter she thought was subverting the meaning of a speech. They went to Mass at the cathedral, and chatted in French. (When two Americans lapse into French, it is usually for the purpose of flirting.) He had been divorced from his first wife, Julia Thorne, for four years, but they had lived separately for a decade. Their daughters, Alexandra and Vanessa, were students of eighteen and fifteen.

The adjectives that Kerry used in describing his second wife to me—"grounded, no-nonsense, down to earth, straightforward"—may not jibe with Andre's image of her as a conundrum; or with Chris's volatile, exacting Latin mother; or with the charming and "cozy" woman who, her friend in Washington says, has a tendency toward "narcissism" in times of stress. But they suggest Heinz Kerry's allure to a rootless and aloof man with a much buffeted personal life. At forty-eight, Kerry had been enjoying—or, at least from the frequency with which his name was linked with beautiful women, seeming to enjoy—the sexual prime of a powerful bachelor, but the gossip annoyed him. He just wanted "to fall in love," he told the Boston *Globe*, which had been tracking his dates, and he didn't want girlfriends attributed to him "until I'm committed and want that relationship known." Kerry's finances were unsettled, too. (His most recent disclosure lists personal assets in the range of half a million to two million dollars.) Thorne had a private income, but Kerry paid child support for his daughters. He owned a small town house in Washington with a big mortgage, and in Boston he camped out with family and friends. He struck Heinz Kerry as a "gypsy" and "a pet wolf" in need of domestication, and nesting was her forte.

Heinz and Kerry met for the third time at a dinner party in the capital, and he offered to see her home. On the way, he took her to the Vietnam Memorial. A few months later, she invited a close friend, the photojournalist Diana Walker, to lunch at her house in Georgetown. As Walker unlatched the back gate and walked through the high-walled garden, where brick paths define islands of roses, she was startled by a sound that presaged the announcement of a sea change in the widow's life: "Teresa whistling in the kitchen."

EXPULSION WITH GOODIE BAGS
Eden
Eden



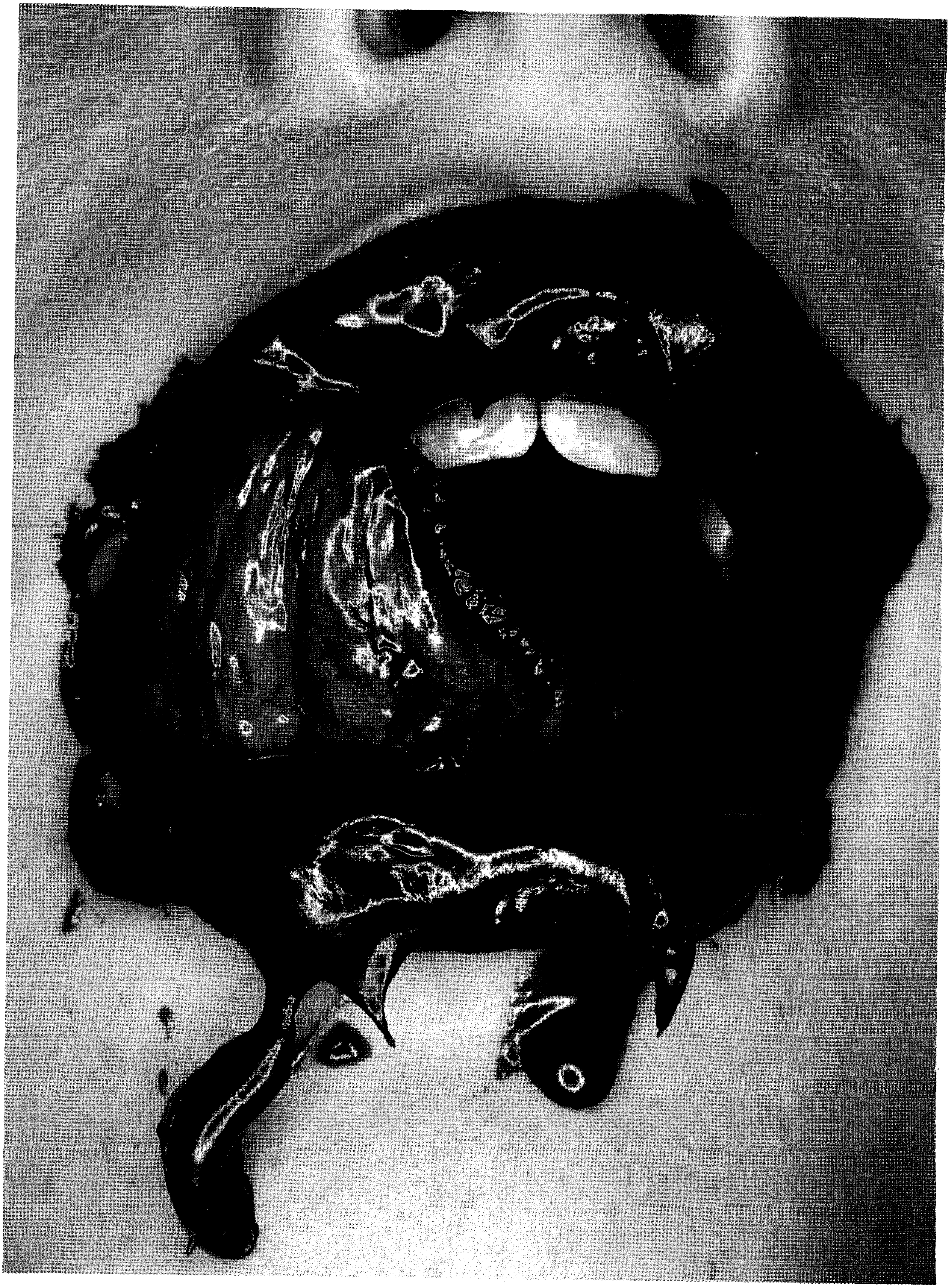
After a brief courtship, a short period of cohabitation, and the signing of a prenuptial agreement, the Kerrys were married in a civil ceremony on Nantucket in 1995. Heinz Kerry wore the girlish dress of a first-time bride, with a ruffled neckline and puffed sleeves, and she settled into what was, in many respects, a familiar life as the consort of a public man. Her second husband, perhaps even more than her first, needed her buoyance. "I think marriage is difficult," she reflected. "When you're older, you bring a lot to the table, so it is harder work in some ways." Kerry brought two teen-age daughters to the table. She believes, in retrospect, that she went about being their stepmother without enough discretion. "Because I thought, I love kids, kids love me, I'll be fine. Baloney." She says that a friend gave her some useful advice: "You have to treat stepchildren like pets. You're nice to them, but you don't get too close, or they chew you up. Well, I did it the other way." When I asked Kerry if remarriage in middle age to a woman with a history to which she still seems deeply attached was a difficult proposition, he replied, in his staccato fashion, "Not in the least. Why would it be hard for me? Look, she fell in love and decided to marry me."

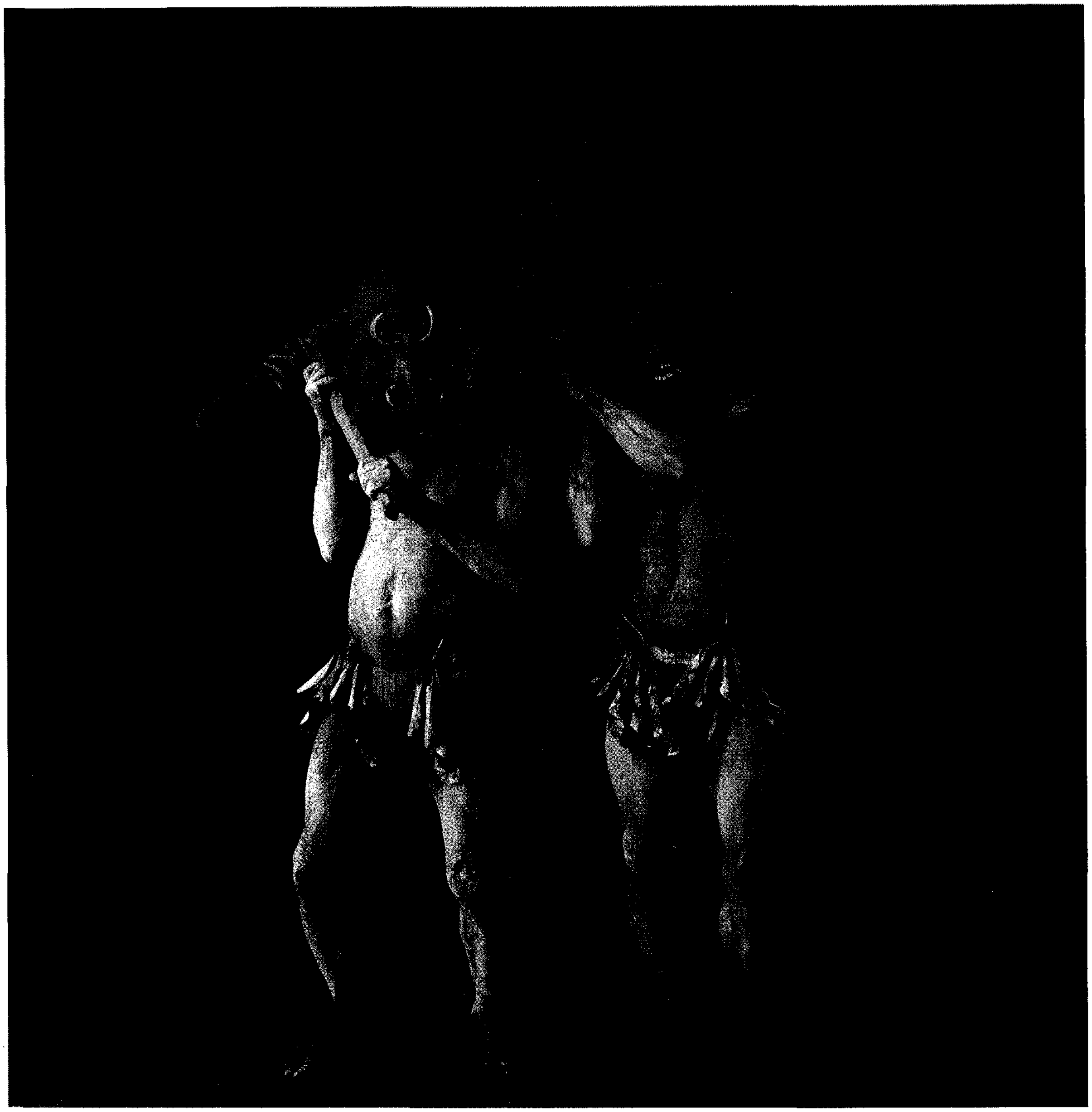
"John makes very close friends, but few," a woman who knows him well says. "His New England austerity is compounded by his reserve, his shyness, his politesse. He's not a glad-hander—he was trained not to be." As the son of a diplomat, who moved from school to school, "he had to be a loner to survive. What I love about John is that he's immensely curious and he never condescends. He also doesn't manipulate. But as a politician that makes him unseductive. He leads with his head." Kerry's seductiveness may not be obvious, but the attraction of a consummately cerebral man to an irrepressibly visceral woman is. Perhaps one of the most eloquent messages that Heinz Kerry delivers to voters on her husband's behalf is that he was fearless enough to take her on.

Late in August, while the Republicans convened in New York, the Kerrys vacationed on Nantucket. They resumed campaigning on Labor Day weekend, and Heinz Kerry spent the holiday in her home state, marching with thousands of citizens in a Pittsburgh parade and speaking at a sparsely attended union picnic and rally in Philadelphia. It took place on a pier near the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, across the Delaware River from Camden, New Jersey. The audience of steamfitters, longshoremen, and janitors had come with their children and wore the T-shirts of their locals.

Heinz Kerry's hair was windblown and her cheeks rosy. Her acid-green suit was the color of an immense tanker, the Chemical Pioneer, slowly steaming up the river behind the stage. "No war is worth fighting if the people in our country aren't defended by good schools, jobs, and health care," she told the audience. It was a new speech: lean of detail, punchy, brief, and delivered with the ease of a seasoned candidate. The shy whisper and distracting tics were gone. At one point, she leaned over to joke with an elderly black woman sitting on a folding chair in the front row who said that she was ninety and had plenty of opinions. There was laughter and applause. "I'm a woman of a certain age and I deserve my opinions," Heinz Kerry said to the audience. "I've earned them the old-fashioned way."

A week later, when Heinz Kerry was on her way to Pittsburgh with Wren Wirth (her close women friends take turns keeping her company on the road), I asked her what she thought about the increasingly vicious campaign, and the cheap caricatures of her personal eccentricities. "It's sad that in America people have to put up with that kind of thing," she said. "It's sadder still that people like it." Her voice on the phone sounded serene—neither embattled nor tinny with false optimism. Her syntax was baroque and elegiac, perhaps with fatigue, and her sentences were curiously wonkish and poetic at the same time. "I am grateful that, being as old as I am"—she mentioned her age twice in the course of a five-minute conversation—"I have developed an interesting way to deal with it that I didn't know I had in me, which is contextualizing what is said, not reading either the puffy things which would give me an oversized head or the things which would give me a shrivelled heart." She spoke of Bush's promise to reduce health-care costs, pointing out that he had just raised Medicare premiums for the elderly by seventeen per cent. "I never thought there would be so many lies," she said. "It's been quite amazing. But I don't dwell there, I dwell in a better house, a house of hope." ♦





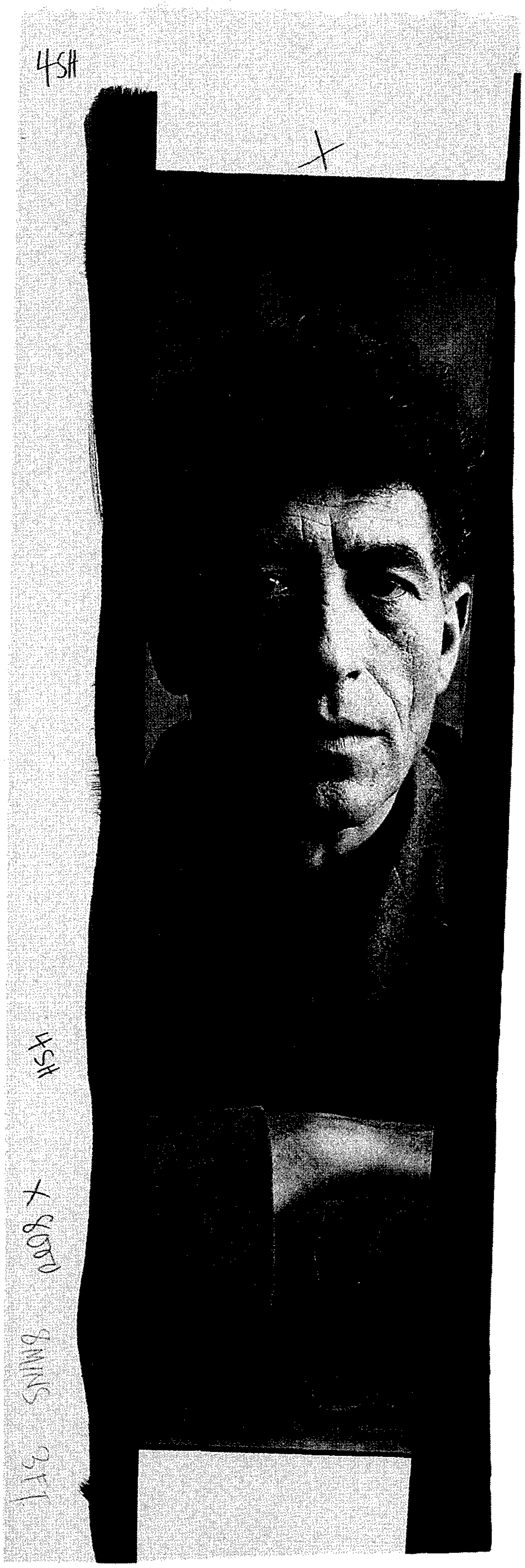
PORTFOLIO

PENN À LA CARTE

Irving Penn selects his favorite things from more than sixty years of work.

BY JUDITH THURMAN

"Chocolate Mouth," New York, December 13, 2000, and, above, "Two Asaro Mudmen," New Guinea, 1970.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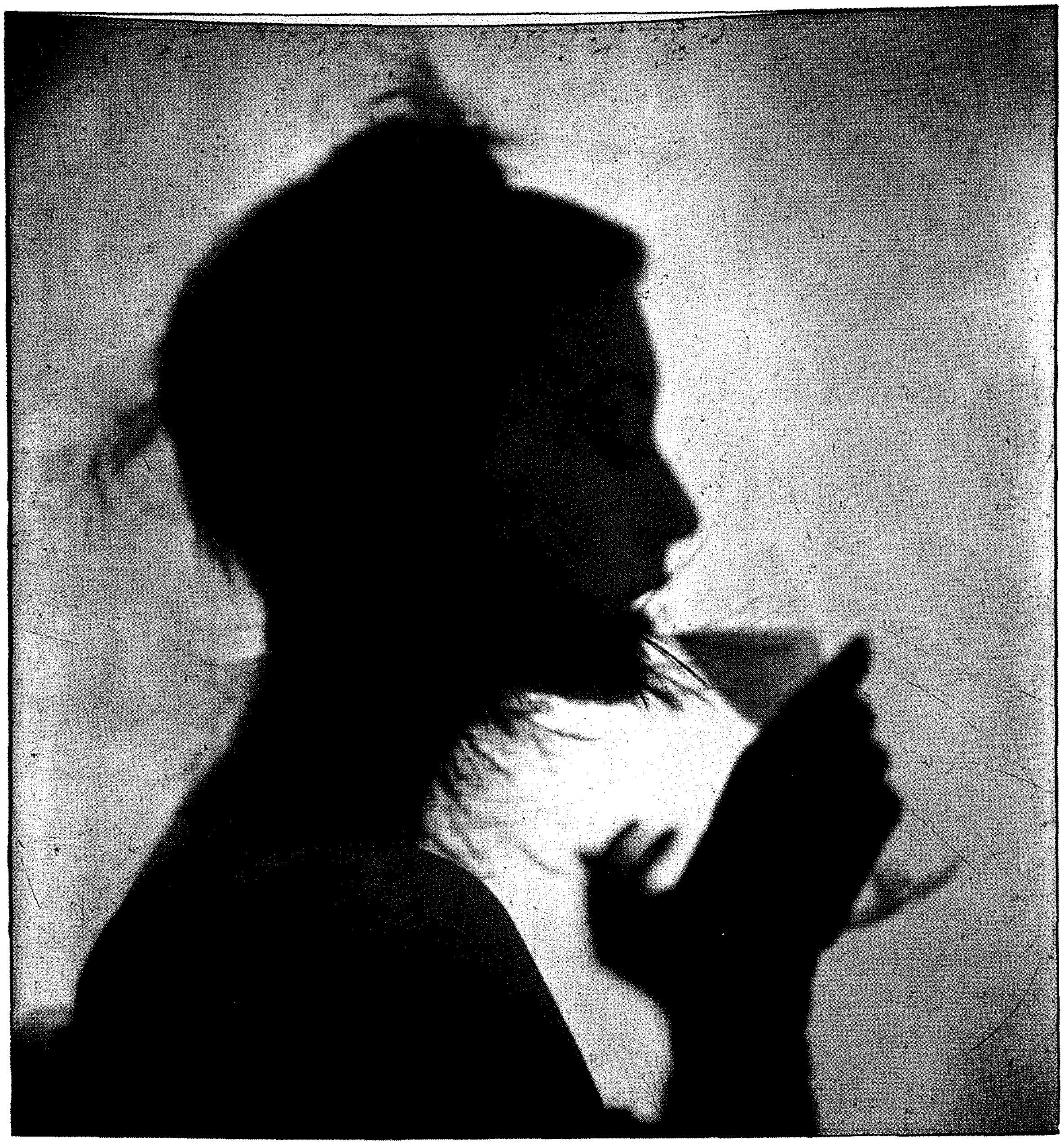
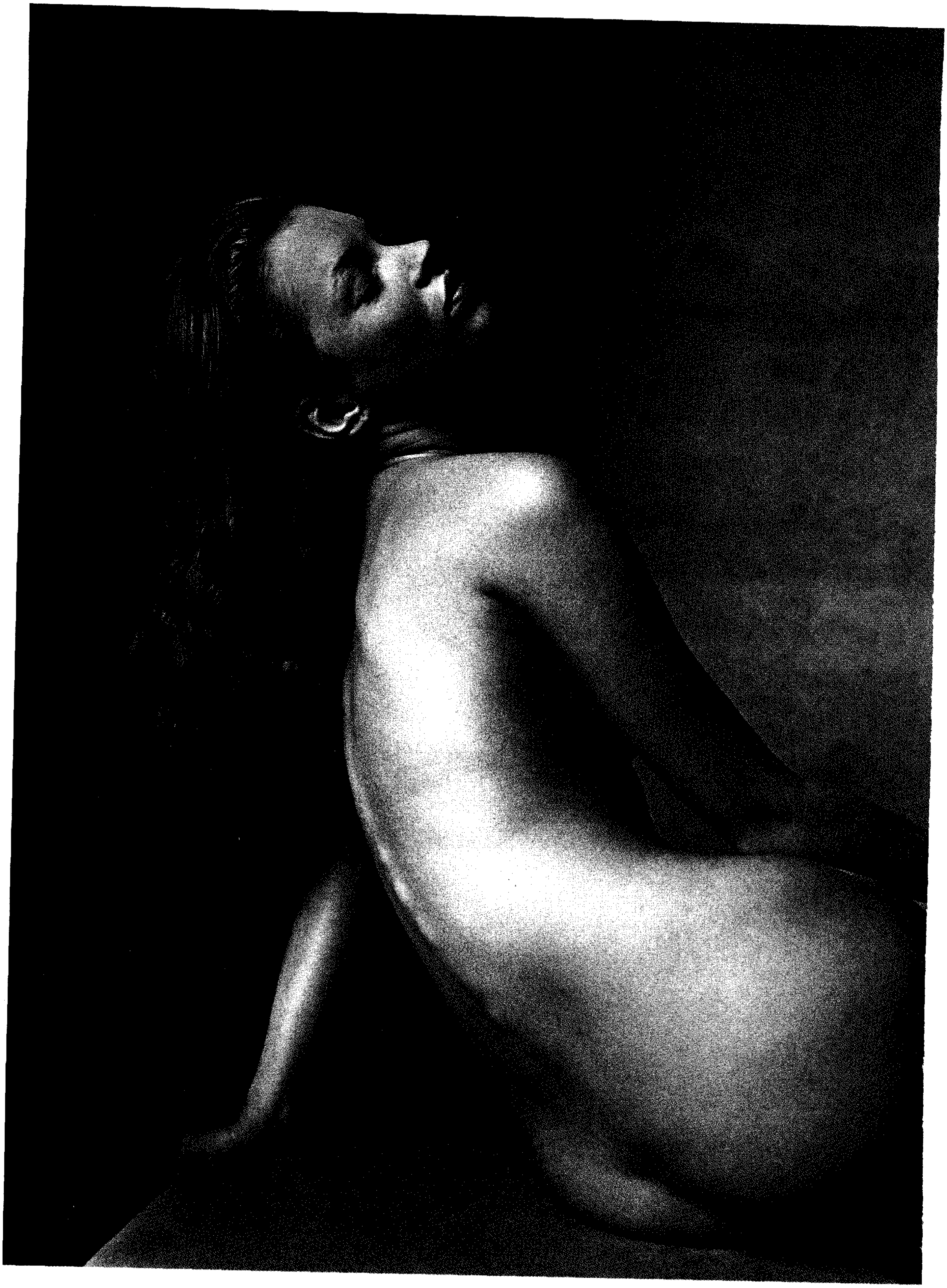


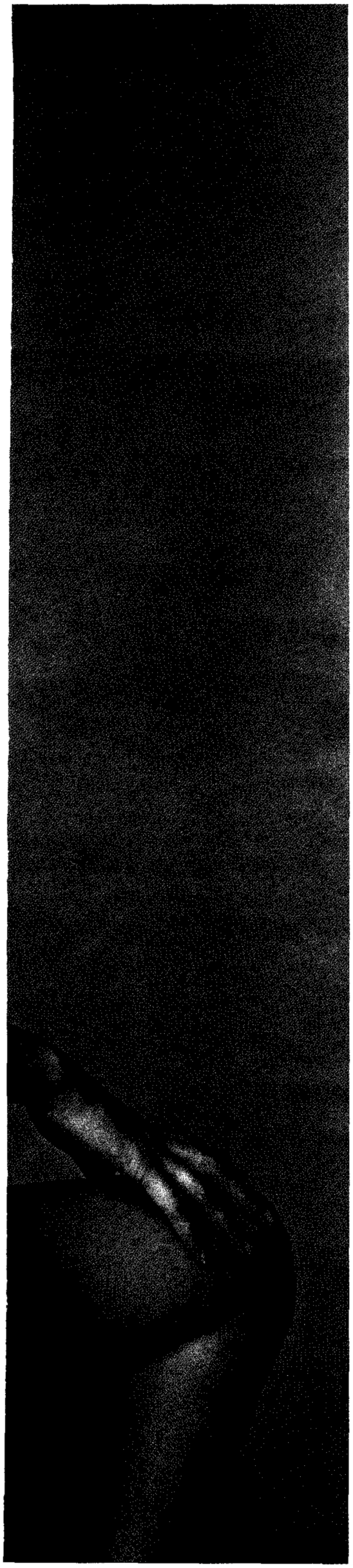
Happy pictures are all alike. Every perfectionist is unhappy in his own way, and his art reminds us that life is a losing battle. Fashion, on the other hand, is the domain of promise, where youth and beauty are perpetually solvent. The conventional purpose of fashion photography is to excite envy (the wellspring of desire) while promoting the illusion that there is almost nothing one can't have. In that sense, the fashion world is an alien habitat for an artist, and the most gifted guest workers who make a living there often attempt to flee its balminess to a more congenially cold climate: an anti-Eden where the perfect couple bicker and decay.

The photography of Irving Penn is one of the twentieth century's most important bodies of work. Penn makes a distinction between his art and the pictures of clothing or accessories, which he dismisses as "commodities," but even though the fashion photographs exist to celebrate the salable, there is always something eating at them, implacably. A disembodied tongue; a splayed peach; a grotesquely slathered maw; an insect; a spoonful of caviar glistening obscenely—all are ready to consume or to be consumed. The nude women in the black-and-white pictures that Penn was discouraged, for decades, from exhibiting (for no better reason, it appears, than that the women were headless and fat) seem to be melting under his lights like ambitious confections whose contours have only half jelled, or are half decomposed. The will, like the flesh, must sag, they suggest.

Penn was a failed painter when he embarked on his career in fashion, as an assistant art director at *Vogue*, sixty-one years ago. He took up a camera because the staff photographers couldn't execute a picture that he had designed for the October 1943 cover. Alexander Liberman, the senior art director, told him to

"Girl Drinking (Mary Jane Russell)," New York, 1949. Left: Fragments of two famous photographs, used in tests of platinum prints in the nineteen-seventies. "Alberto Giacometti," Paris, 1950, and "Woman with Roses (Lisa Fonssagrives)," Paris, 1950.





give it a try. Penn produced a somewhat busy, Braque-ish still-life that evoked the front hall table of a horsey matron, and he has experimented with the genre more subversively ever since. The fastidious clutter disappeared and was replaced by the detritus of louche nights on the town; memento mori; and—in some of his most famous images—cigar butts and sodden gutter swill. Employed to purvey opulence and joie de vivre (which Penn did and does better than almost anyone else living), the modern artist out of his element and homesick for discomfiture makes an aesthetic of it. In the great pictures of Penn's wife, Lisa Fonssagrives, modelling the couture of the late nineteen-forties and early fifties, he was the first to strip the fashion photograph of a context and props. For the portraits that he took for *Vogue* in the same period (of nearly everyone grand and notable at mid-century), he backed his elegant subjects into a shabby corner—the acute angle formed by battered wooden panels. He photographed native warriors in masks and feathers against a drab dropcloth, as if they were Fonssagrives or Giacometti. Beauty, Penn implies, makes him claustrophobic, but he has never been able to escape it.

He is now eighty-seven, and a widower. Most of his intimates refer to him in conversation not by his first name or his last, but—with quaint formality—as "Mr. Penn." Their reverence is so well-earned both by the distinction of the work and by the courtliness of the man that the honorific doesn't seem servile or pretentious. If one were to translate "Mr. Penn" into French, it wouldn't be *monsieur*—it would have to be *maître*. The master has just published a new collection of photographs, "A Notebook at Random" (Bulfinch; $65), a laconic volume with no introductory essay and very little explanatory text. Two offhand sentences by the author serve as its epigraph: "The reader might find himself travelling along a path through many countries, through years of time, distant cultures, in the presence of lovely women and brilliant men. His path would make small detours among inanimate objects, foods, drawings, paintings, amusements, and seductions."

Though the title advertises a deliberate nonchalance, it is difficult, at first, to grasp Penn's motive or criteria for selecting, from such a vast and rich œuvre, these particular images, or how he decided upon their sequence. Some of this material will surely still be admired in two hundred years, and some, however charming, is ephemera. In addition to the famous and not-so-famous photographs, there are fragments of pictures used in testing platinum prints, preliminary sketches, an example of Liberman's cropmarks, watercolors, and a worksheet from a photo lab. Voguish frivolity consorts with existential anguish, abstraction with carnality, and, as always in Penn's work, appetite with disgust. I wondered, though, if—as he meandered through his archives and laid the prints out on the work table in the whiteness of a studio familiarly known as "the hospital"—he wasn't thinking of Walter Benjamin.

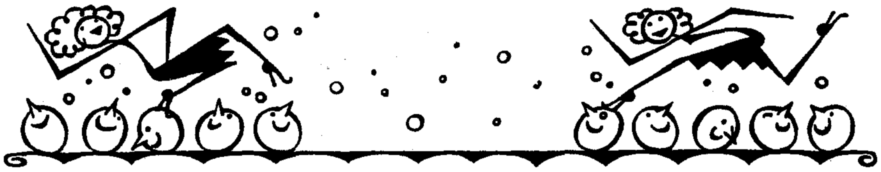
Benjamin, like Penn, was smitten by Paris and French culture as a young man, and a central figure in his work is that quintessential Parisian, the *flâneur*. This idle stroller is adrift in the city, his passive senses exquisitely attuned. His greatest luxury is to have no purpose. Like the photographer and his subjects, he is a solitary figure. Even when the mud men of New Guinea, the sublime and enigmatic Mrs. Penn, the stunted children of Cuzco, and the wary old Colette return his gaze, it isolates them completely. Their mutual contemplation is that of the ambler staring—with the impartial gall of an infant or a predator—at passing strangers, one of whom may be himself, fractured in a shopwindow. There is probably no more impersonal, yet no more concentrated, distillation of intimacy.

Like Penn, Benjamin preferred phenomena to ideas and curiosities to treasures, the tinier and weirder the better (he greatly admired two grains of wheat inscribed with a Hebrew prayer), and the aim of his ramble, he wrote, was "to capture a portrait of history in the most insignificant representations of reality, its scraps, as it were." In photographic terms that ideal might be an album as random and capricious as this one: a survey of the material world conducted, over a lifetime, with such metaphysical fidelity that it transcends the need for explanation. ♦

"Kate Moss," New York, 1996.

© CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS EXCEPT "TWO ASARO MUDMEN," NEW GUINEA, 1970 © 2004 IRVING PENN

THE CRITICS



A CRITIC AT LARGE

A LIFE IN GOOD TASTE

The fashions and follies of Elsie de Wolfe.

BY RUTH FRANKLIN

In 1921, at the pinnacle of her decorating career, Elsie de Wolfe sued one of her clients for neglecting to pay her for seventeen thousand dollars' worth of furniture. De Wolfe had never before set foot in a courtroom, but cross-examination presented no terrors for a woman who, at the age of fifty-six, was plucky enough to perform headstands in public. When the opposing attorney asked whether she had written a certain letter, she replied that she was not a stenographer. When asked whether she had overseen the furniture shipment, she replied that she was not a shipper. "Well," the lawyer asked, "what do you do, Miss de Wolfe?" In her autobiography, de Wolfe recalled, "I looked at him, as though he had been graciousness personified, and said in a voice of milk and honey, 'I create beauty.'"

De Wolfe is credited with single-handedly inventing the profession of interior decorating. She envisioned the home as a medium for self-expression and herself as a kind of life-style artist. A tiny woman who liked to wear short white gloves and to carry at least one little dog, she furnished homes from Manhattan to Paris, Saint-Tropez to Beverly Hills. Though a shrewd business sense and a sharp eye for antiques allowed her to amass a fortune, she based her style not on material goods but on her own principles of taste: a vision of refined yet comfortable living that she insisted was attainable by all. She distilled this sensibility in columns she wrote for *The Delineator*, one of the turn-of-the-century "pattern sheets" that evolved into the genre known as the ladies' magazine. The columns were collected and published in 1913 as "The House in Good Taste," and the book became a best-seller. Defying the Victorian fashion for dark furniture and heavy draperies, de Wolfe repeatedly exhorted her readers to embrace "simplicity and suitability." In what might be taken as her artistic credo, she wrote, "I believe in plenty of optimism and white paint, comfortable chairs with lights beside them, open fires on the hearth and flowers wherever they 'belong,' mirrors and sunshine in all rooms."

Now back in print, more than ninety years later, "The House in Good Taste" (Rizzoli; $26) testifies to the potency of de Wolfe's influence. Her assertion that "we take it for granted that everyone is interested in houses" feels truer than ever, after a decade that saw the fad of "cocooning," the creation of hip life-style magazines with names like *Nest* and *Dwell*, and the exponential multiplication of Pottery Barns all over America. Inevitably, her advice on the arrangement of furniture in the drawing room or the placement of electric lights in the boudoir is as charmingly dated as her penchant, in old age, for tinting her hair blue or lavender to match her outfit—one of many trends that she initiated. But both her streamlined aesthetic and the assumptions underpinning it are as relevant now as they were at the turn of the century. In an era when conspicuous consumption reached newly stratospheric heights, she redefined taste as a virtue accessible to the middle classes. "After all, what surer guarantee can there be of a person's character, natural and cultivated, inherent and inherited, than taste?" she wrote. "When people have taste they may have faults, follies, fads, they may err, they may be as human and honest as they please, but they will never cause a scandal!" The "good" in "good taste" had taken on a moral component—a weight that, unsurprisingly, it could not entirely bear.

Elsie de Wolfe was born in New York in 1865. In her autobiography, she described herself as "an ugly child" who lived in "an ugly age." Her father earned a reasonable income as a doctor but had debts, and the family had to move frequently, inhabiting a series of brownstones—a style of house that Elsie found hideous and dark. Her earliest memory was of coming home one day to discover that her mother had redecorated the sitting room in a garish color scheme; when she saw it, "something terrible that cut like a knife" came up in her chest, and she fell on the floor in a tantrum, kicking and screaming. An infatuation with Europe began when she was a teenager. Her parents sent her to a well-placed aunt and uncle in Scotland for "finishing" and then to England, where she was presented to the Queen. When she returned to New York, a few years later, she had already made a number of friends on the society circuit, and she began to perform as an amateur actress. Not long afterward, at a party, she caught the eye of Elisabeth (Bessy) Marbury, who was her companion for the next forty years.

Like de Wolfe, Marbury had the distinction of inventing a profession in which she went on to achieve extraordinary success: after convincing Victorien Sardou, the president of the French Society of Dramatic Authors, that she should collect royalties on behalf of the French writers whose plays in translation were Broadway hits, she set up shop as a literary agent. Soon, she and de Wolfe were fixtures at the extravagant parties and costume balls that were the chief society entertainments during that era. The pair formed the center of a group of unmarried society women that also included Anne Morgan (the daughter of

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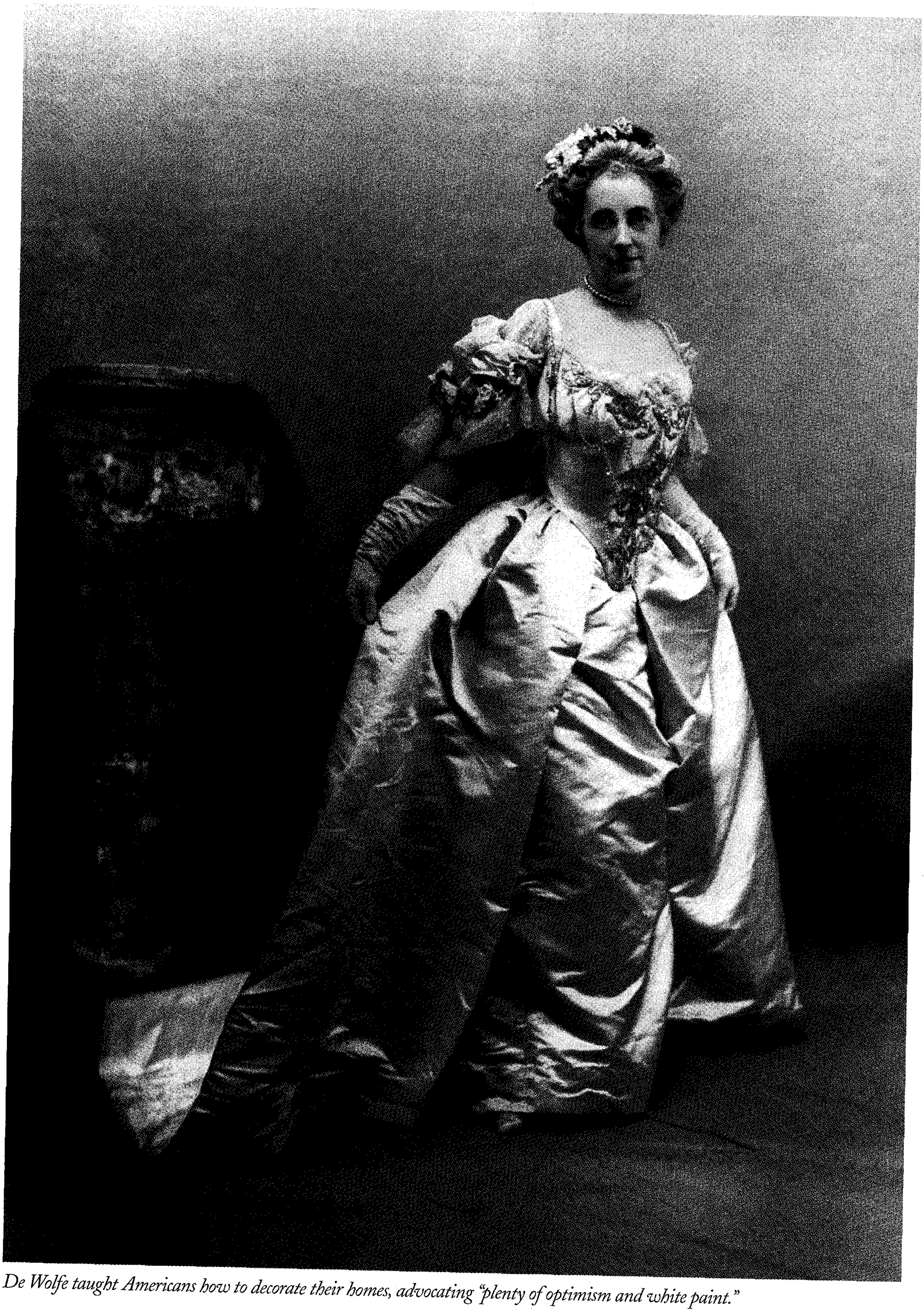
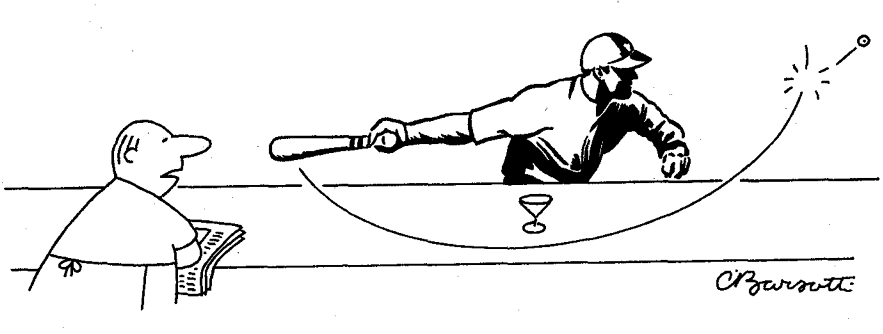


De Wolfe taught Americans how to decorate their homes, advocating "plenty of optimism and white paint."

J. P. Morgan) and Anne Vanderbilt. As Marbury built her business, which eventually represented major British playwrights such as Wilde and Shaw, along with most of the French theatre, de Wolfe tried to develop her acting career. Her professional début, in 1891, was in Sardou's melodrama "Thermidor," and drew terrible reviews. After that, she stuck to lighter fare, and was proclaimed by one theatre critic to be "the leading exponent of . . . the peculiar art of wearing good clothes well." She travelled to France every summer to choose her own costumes for the next season, and women in the audience then ordered the same styles or had them copied. In France, she also developed a taste for the architecture and furnishings of the eighteenth century, which had fallen out of fashion, replaced by the Victoriana that she detested. "What she had discovered was not a new style but a new sense of the way a house should function," de Wolfe's biographer Jane S. Smith wrote. It was "a synthesis of comfort, practicality, and tradition that would turn out to be precisely what the coming century would crave."

In 1892, when de Wolfe and Marbury moved into their first house together, at Seventeenth Street and Irving Place, de Wolfe had an opportunity to practice her new aesthetic of "light, air and comfort." She replaced the dark woodwork and patterned wallpaper with plain walls painted in pale neutrals, removed the velvet curtains in the windows and doorways, eliminated most of the carpets, and replaced the heavy furniture with more delicate designs. In all these efforts she was guided by her appreciation of her own requirements for living well and an assumption that her taste was, or should be, universal. "The little table must hold a good reading light, well-shaded, for who doesn't like to read in bed?" she commented on the bedroom furnishings. "There must also be a clock, and there really should be a telephone. And the *chaise-longue*, or couch, as the case may be, should be both comfortable and beautiful. Who hasn't longed for a comfortable place to snatch forty winks at midday?"

As it happened, the house was a better outlet for de Wolfe's creative energies than the theatre: after a decade of performing professionally, she continued to attract more attention for her clothes than for her acting, and she leaped at the idea of capitalizing on her talent for decorating. (Marbury, once again showing her knack for the right idea at the right time, may have suggested it to her.) She went into business in early 1905, landing her first big commission almost immediately: New York's Colony Club, an exclusive new club for women, complete with swimming pool, roof garden, card room, Turkish bath, gym, library, bar, and guest rooms. Her next high-profile project was a collaboration with the architect Ogden Codman on an Upper East Side town house, one of those "dismal brownstone buildings" that she had so despised as a child. She and Codman gutted the place and redesigned it from the bottom up, creating the prototype of the elegant town house: they eliminated the stoop, moving the entrance to the ground floor and the staircase to the center. De Wolfe was so pleased by the result that she bought and renovated another town house, for herself and Marbury. The pair had also recently bought an eighteenth-century mansion in Versailles; it was known as the Villa Trianon and had been built by Louis XV as a retreat from the main palace. The house was a wreck, but they got it for sixty-five thousand francs (twelve thousand dollars)—a princely sum at the time, though well under the asking price, as de Wolfe never tired of mentioning—and its restoration became her life's great project. Several years later, when Theodore Dreiser, then the editor of *The Delineator*, sought a writer who could educate his middle-class readers in matters of domestic style (other columnists included H. L. Mencken on baby care), de Wolfe was the obvious choice.



"No question, Lefty, you've still got it."

Part step-by-step house-beautification manual, part aesthetic treatise, "The House in Good Taste" opens with one of de Wolfe's characteristically bold declarations: "I know of nothing more significant than the awakening of men and women throughout our country to the desire to improve their houses." This brazen embrace of the superficial goes to the heart of de Wolfe's character. For her, decorating was nothing less than a moral issue: you are where you live. "You will express yourself, in your home, whether you want to or not," she cautioned:

> We may talk of the weather, but we are looking at the furniture. We attribute vulgar qualities to those who are content to live in ugly surroundings. We endow with refinement and charm the person who welcomes us in a delightful room, where the colors blend and the proportions are as perfect as in a picture.

In developing her standards of taste, de Wolfe looked first to the past. Antique furniture was built according to rules of stability and utility, and "if an object fulfills its mission, the chances are that it is beautiful." "Form follows function" was about to become the catchphrase of a new generation of architects, but, while de Wolfe sympathized with this principle, she had no use for modernism, and felt it was better "to accept the standards of other times, and adapt them to our uses." Her style may have been reactionary, but her convictions were democratic. She believed firmly that "good taste can be developed in anyone, just as surely as good manners are possible to anyone. And good taste is as necessary as good manners." Its only requirements were "to recognize suitability, simplicity, and proportion": "A technical knowledge of architecture is not necessary to know that a huge stuffed leather chair in a tiny gold and cream room is unsuitable." Although de Wolfe considered genuine articles, no matter how basic, better than imitations, she was not categorically opposed to reproductions, and became one of their leading popularizers. Suitability, again, was the benchmark: "The soft brown of oak is a pleasure after the overpolished mahogany of a thousand rooms."

"The House in Good Taste" moves through the house room by room, combining practical advice with the exuberance and insouciance that defines de Wolfe's style. She prefers painted rather than papered walls, "plain and quiet, ready to receive sincere things, but quite good enough to get along without pictures if necessary." In the drawing room, furniture must be placed so as to encourage conversation: "I have seen a shy young woman completely changed because she happened to sit upon a certain deep cushioned sofa of rose-colored damask. Whether it was the rose color, or the enforced relaxation the sofa induced, or the proximity of some very charming people in comfortable chairs beside her, or all of these things—I don't know! But she found herself. She found herself gay and happy and unafraid. I am sure her personality flowered from that hour on." De Wolfe concludes her remarks on the dining room—"the gloomiest room in the house"—by advising that it be avoided altogether. "Eating outdoors makes for good health and long life and good temper, everyone knows that. The simplest meal seems a gala affair when everyone is radiant and cheerful, whereas a long and elaborate meal served indoors is usually depressing." In the dressing room, an abundance of mirrors and electric lights is essential: "Know the worst before you go out!"

De Wolfe's relatively modest background served her well in her concessions to *The Delineator's* audience, which range from suggestions for do-it-yourself painting projects to an entire chapter on the particular problems of apartment living. A surprising amount of this advice remains applicable in today's New York. "Let me beg of you to demand only the actual essentials: a decent neighborhood, good light and air, and at least one reasonably large room," she says. "Don't demand perfection, for you won't find it." Once you've got the right place, there's no sense in being cheap: "Of course, I do not advise you to spend a lot of money on someone else's property, but why not look the matter squarely in the face? This is to be your home. You will find a number of things that annoy you—life in any city furnishes annoyances. But if you have one or two reasonably large rooms, plenty of light and air, and respectable surroundings, make up your mind that you will not move every year. That you will make a home of this place, and then go ahead and treat it as a home!" Of course, it helps if the landlord is "a reasonable human being who will consent to certain changes, if necessary." But, if he won't, then "go without a new hat, if necessary, and pay for the paper yourself." This gives a good sense of de Wolfe's priorities, though it is hard to imagine that she herself ever went without a hat.

Jane S. Smith, in her biography of de Wolfe, criticizes the "extraordinary social obtuseness" of suggesting that one of the bedrooms in a two-bedroom apartment could be turned into a dressing room: "The possibility of more than two people inhabiting such a space did not seem to have entered her mind." One can hardly expect much in the way of political correctness from a writer who proclaimed a deep sympathy for Marie Antoinette, but in fact de Wolfe did possess something resembling a social conscience. She was active in the fight for woman's suffrage, and during the First World War she offered the Villa Trianon to the Red Cross for use as a hospital and volunteered as a nurse in a burn unit (for which she received the Légion d'Honneur). Still, as the years went by she grew more and more removed from the readers of *The Delineator.* The highlight of her career, both professionally and financially, came just before the war, when Henry Clay Frick hired her to decorate the private rooms in the new mansion he was building at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Seventieth Street. In Paris, she guided Frick on a tour of a legendary art collection that had belonged to Sir Richard Wallace, advising on purchases for Frick's future museum. In a single extraordinary morning, Frick spent between one million and three million dollars on paintings, sculpture, tapestries, furnishings, and other objets d'art; whatever the final sum, de Wolfe's commission of ten per cent gave her one of the highest incomes that year in America.

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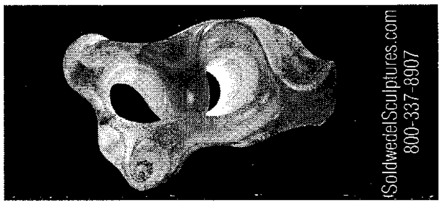

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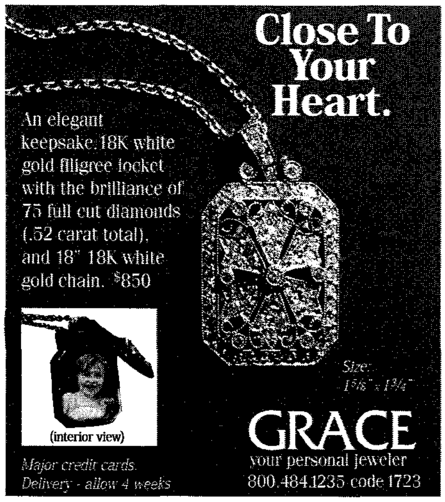

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remained in New York and became active in the Democratic Party, while de Wolfe spent more and more time in France, where she became the "best-known American hostess in Europe." Her parties were famous for their skimpy menus, abundant flowers, and amusing company, with guest lists that included Coco Chanel and Douglas Fairbanks. "She mixes people like a cocktail—and the result is sheer genius," Wallis Simpson, a frequent visitor, remarked. In 1926, at the age of sixty, de Wolfe surprised all her friends by suddenly marrying Sir Charles Mendl, the press attaché for the British Embassy in Paris. Smith calls their relationship a "mariage à raison," explaining that "Charles was charming and Elsie was rich," and that "they shared the same enthusiasms for people, parties, and the fine art of luxurious living." According to Hilda West, de Wolfe's longtime housekeeper, de Wolfe had simply decided she wanted a title (after the marriage, she was known as Lady Mendl). Whatever the explanation, the marriage appears to have been primarily for social convenience: the couple entertained together, but they kept separate homes. When, ten years later, de Wolfe published her autobiography, her husband hardly merited a mention.

It may be too harsh to accuse de Wolfe of "extraordinary social obtuseness," but her greater devotion to her possessions than to her companions bespeaks a superficiality that often shaded into obliviousness, particularly in later years. A lifetime of choosing paintings based on whether they matched the sofa left her unable to develop any deep appreciation of art. "It's beige! My color!" was her first reaction upon glimpsing the Parthenon. Visiting Gertrude Stein in Paris, she was reportedly "horrified" by the work of Salvador Dali, and bewildered by the other paintings in Stein's incomparable collection. ("Do you paint?" she had asked Dali when they were introduced.) For all de Wolfe's aesthetic sense, her trademark was making old things seem new again; she was a conservator, not an innovator. A reviewer for the *New Statesman and Nation* lamented that de Wolfe's autobiography, "written after so long and so prominent a career, seems untrammeled by any smattering of culture." He continued, "As propaganda for the social revolution this book should be invaluable, and it may have a permanent interest to the historians of our decay."

Likewise, de Wolfe's exquisite sensibility did not extend into the political arena. In Rome at Easter in 1933, she commented that "only Mussolini and Jesus Christ could stage a spectacle like this," and posed for a picture giving the Fascist salute. One of de Wolfe's last great parties at the Villa Trianon, in the summer of 1939, featured an entourage of elephants and Princess Karam of Kapurthala as the guest of honor; the gathering found its way onto the political page of the New York *Times* as the setting for a meeting between the French foreign minister, Georges Bonnet, and the German ambassador to Paris, who had been discussing the status of Danzig just a few hours before. Germany invaded Poland two months later. A person's house may well mirror his or her character, and de Wolfe's was too crowded with bedazzlements for her to notice the world-changing drama taking place literally in her own back yard.

In her old age, de Wolfe surrounded herself with a series of younger men whom she took on as protégés, and she continued to conduct her life in the high style. When the Nazis' approach forced her and Charles into exile in California, she rescued a Beverly Hills mansion from ruin, named it After All (a favorite expression that was also the title of her autobiography), and turned it into a palace of mirrors and palms. Objects, not people, still seemed to offer her primary emotional sustenance. "Probably when another woman would be dreaming of love affairs, I dream of the delightful houses I have lived in," she had written in "The House in Good Taste." "I think that is why some people like my rooms—they feel, without quite knowing why, that I have loved them while making them." As the Second World War destroyed the French countryside she was so fond of, she labored to rescue a cherished stool from her house in Versailles (it had been Marie Antoinette's), and when it finally joined her in California she spent a morning moving it around the room so that it could sun itself after its traumatic voyage. She died at the Villa Trianon in 1950, attended only by her maid, in the shelter of her most adored creation. ♦

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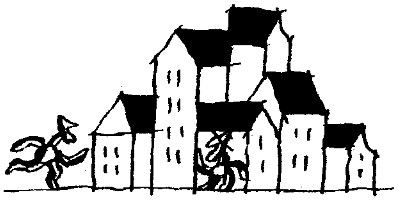
BRIEFLY NOTED

The Egyptologist, *by Arthur Phillips (Random House; $24.95).* This witty second novel plays with fire—"Pale Fire," that is—by daring to appropriate the scheme of Nabokov's cleverest novel. In both books, a deranged scholar, laying out a putatively brilliant yet comically improbable thesis, gradually reveals his own bitterness and delusions of grandeur. It's immediately obvious that Ralph M. Trilipush—an obscure Egyptologist who claims to have discovered the tomb of an unknown yet visionary Pharaoh—is off his rocker. The fun comes in the way his megalomania mirrors the temperament of supposedly levelheaded scholars. (He engages in hilariously pedantic combat with the man who found King Tut's tomb.) Phillips is nearly as deft as Nabokov at parodying the academic mind, and understands that his work must transcend mere homage. Unfortunately, he tricks up his plot by adding a dull detective who labors to expose Trilipush's lies, and by stealing a twist from "The Talented Mr. Ripley." The result is pastiche overload.

Birds Without Wings, *by Louis de Bernières (Knopf; $25.95).* "Destiny caresses the few, but molests the many," a proverb-prone narrator reflects as he begins the story of Eskibahçe, a small town in Anatolia, and of its inhabitants' fate in the turmoil of the early twentieth century. After generations of cheerful intermingling, the town's Muslim Turks, Christian Greeks, and Armenians are divided by the First World War and then by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. De Bernières gamely tries to illustrate the human cost—a complex series of migrations and persecutions—through a cast of endearing, folksy characters. He interleaves the narratives with the biography of Kemal Atatürk. But history, in this case, may be too vast for his approach; despite many affecting moments, both the big picture and the small stories are lost in an overwhelming sprawl.

The Family, *by Kitty Kelley (Random House; $29.95).* Kelley's reputation as an "unauthorized biographer" precedes her—how many authors feel the need to mention that they've "never lost a lawsuit"?—and she is best appreciated less as an investigative journalist than as a folklorist, amassing a compendium of gossip (much of it denied by her subjects). Generations of Bushes have given her plenty of material. She presents Prescott, the alcoholic senator who beat his children; George H.W., the tightfisted husband with a mink-clad mistress; and a supporting cast of uncles and brothers embroiled with dictators and Japanese Mafiosi. There is Barbara's grudge-bearing (a streak so mean one feels almost sorry for Nancy Reagan), Laura's reputation as a college drug source, and ex-daughter-in-law Sharon's tales (since recanted) of cocaine at Camp David. Capping it all is George W., who—from financial shadiness and substance abuse to a suspect military record and a blithe confidence that he deserves all he has been given and more—is portrayed not as the family's black sheep but as the epitome of its values.

Mosaic, *by Michael Holroyd (Norton; $24.95).* "Basil Street Blues," a 1999 memoir by the well-known British biographer, recounted his feckless parents' slide from fortune in a masterly panorama of waning upper-middle-class life. This sequel clears up loose ends: readers, sometimes irate, write to correct aspects of the family story, and Holroyd hunts, often at extravagant length, for archival clues about some of the more elusive characters. This makes for a bit of a grab bag, but Holroyd can make even the red tape surrounding probate seem comic and sad. He comes closer to self-portrait than previously, wryly pointing up the detachment beneath his equable exterior. At the funeral of a nonagenarian aunt, he is the only mourner until a representative of her nursing home, who never met her, arrives and promptly bursts into tears: "Anyone seeing us must have concluded that she is the sorrowing relative and I the bland official."



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BOOKS

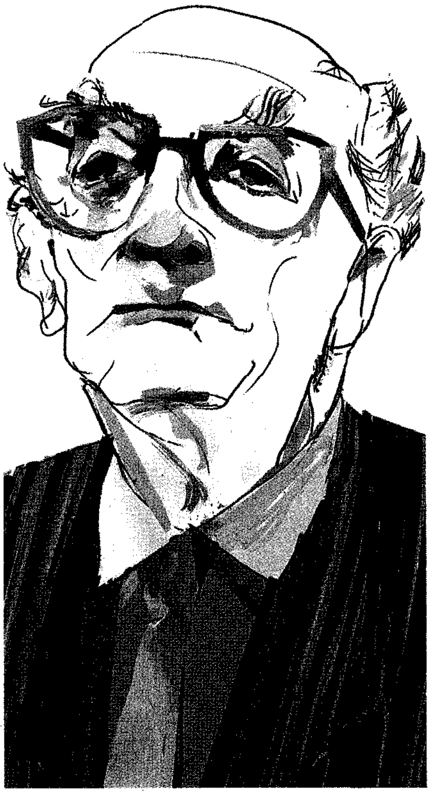
TWO'S A CROWD

A new novel from a Portuguese veteran.

BY JOHN UPDIKE

The Portuguese novelist José Saramago, born in 1922, has not let the Nobel Prize, which he received in 1998, slow him down. He was a late starter in the lists of fiction, having been a civil servant and sometime journalist to the age of fifty. He found his groove in the baroque magic-realist historical novel "Baltasar and Blimunda" (1982 in Portugal, when he turned sixty; 1987 in the U.S.), and combines, in the novels of his productive eighth decade—"Blindness" (1995, 1997), "All the Names" (1997, 1999), and "The Cave" (2000, 2002)—fantastic premises with a relaxed, disarmingly direct style and a quizzical, respectful interest in everyday life. His prose is open to philosophical and psychological speculation as well as to homely folk wisdom, and its flights into the impossible are balanced by a feeling for the daily routines and labors that compose, for most of humanity, the substance of existence. Saramago is, in the not uncommon fashion of Latin intellectuals, an avowed Communist; his sympathy for workers broadens and solidifies his fictional thought-experiments.

His new novel, "The Double" (published in Portuguese in 2002; translated by Margaret Jull Costa; Harcourt; $25), deals with white-collar workers: the thirty-eight-year-old hero, the impressively named Tertuliano Máximo Afonso, teaches history in a secondary school; the divorced Tertuliano's present lady friend, Maria da Paz, works in a bank; Tertuliano's double, António Claro, acts in minor movie roles under the name of Daniel Santa-Clara; his wife, Helena, works in a travel agency. Their interactions and confusions, as intricate as those of a French bedroom farce, are scrupulously placed within the confines of working days and seasonal vacations, just as the waking nightmare, for Tertuliano and António, of confronting an exact physical duplicate is set in a sufficiently persuasive (though unnamed) metropolis of five million people, with their automobiles, their apartments, their anonymity. The wildly ramifying plot has an improvised air but proves to be tightly knit, constructed toward a stark dénouement. The tight construction floats, however, on a bubbling, uninhibited authorial voice of cheerful volatility, brimming with asides and self-corrections, such as "Well, that's not quite true" and "There are moments in a narrative, and this, as you will see, has been one of them, when any parallel manifestation of ideas and feelings on the part of the narrator with respect to what the characters themselves might be feeling or thinking at that point should be expressly forbidden by the laws of good writing."



José Saramago

RICCARDO VECCHIO

Saramago has the gift of gab. Our impression is of a writer, like Faulkner, so confident of his resources and ultimate destination that he can bring any improbability to life by hurling words at it. Gabbiness is hard to illustrate in a concise review, but here is a relatively short example, working up to virtual impenetrability:

> Real life has always seemed to us more frugal in coincidences than the novel or other forms of fiction, unless we were to allow that the principle of coincidence is the one true ruler of the world, in which case, we should give as much value to the coincidence one actually experiences as to that which is written about, and vice versa.

And here is another, working up to a joke of sorts:

> If, as children used to be told, in order to illustrate the relationship between small causes and great effects, for want of a shoe the horse was lost, for want of a horse the battle was lost, the trajectory followed by the deductions and inductions that brought Tertuliano Máximo Afonso to the conclusion set out above seems to us no less dubious and problematic than that edifying episode from the history of wars whose first agent and ultimate culprit must have been, when all's said and done and with no room for objections, the professional incompetence of the vanquished army's farrier.

Of the book's two epigraphs, one is invented and the other comes from "Tristram Shandy," Laurence Sterne's gabby proto-modernist masterpiece of self-inquisition, a work whose merry challenge to the conventions of the realistic novel has proved, after its initial London fame, more influential on the Continent than in England.

The traditional articulations of English fiction are dismissed in the very look of Saramago's prose, presented in paragraphs many of which are pages long. Direct speech is not marked even by dashes, let alone quotation marks; the utterances of a dialogue run together with only commas to separate them, plus the capitals that begin a sentence—a manner perhaps less confusing in Portuguese than in English, where the frequent word "I," following a comma, seems, falsely, to signal a different speaker. The reader must wonder what advantage of mimetic fidelity is gained in the author's mind: the long, unpunctuated paragraphs of Molly Bloom's stream of consciousness at the end of "Ulysses" declare a fresh, all-embracing, female point of view; the Austrian Thomas Bernhard's unrelieved blocks of type express his rageful contempt for the reader, Austria, and life in general. In Saramago's case, his embedding the dialogue almost invisibly in the expository prose must indicate a sense of

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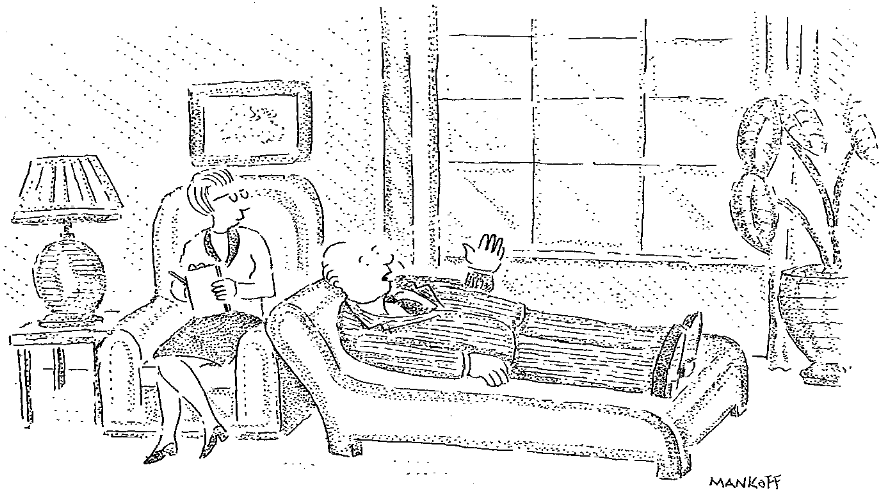
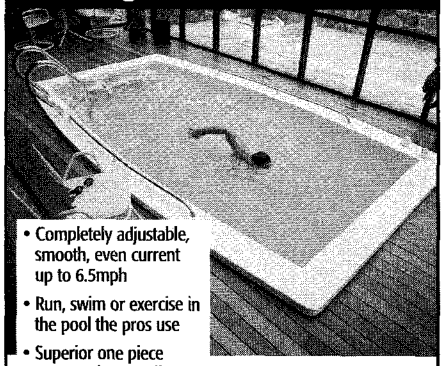
his characters' speech merging with their thoughts and impressions, which in turn merge with the author's flowing voice, as overbearing and possessive, in its way, as that of a moralizing Victorian.

"The Double" gathers in interest as the action moves from Tertuliano's distress and bafflement at his own duplication to his intervention in the life of his double, the double's retaliation, and the growing involvement of the two women, Maria da Paz and Helena. These women—like most of Saramago's—are sensible, warm, and alert, and their presence provides a civilized context, an index of peaceful possibility, for what becomes, between the two identical-looking men, a savage and vengeful war tinged with an atavistic horror of identity theft and a belief in the triumphal content of seducing an enemy's woman. What tragedy resides in the outcome resides in the ill-used women's feelings; the men are less sympathetic. Tertuliano, that meek and lonely history teacher, is described at the beginning as suffering from depression; but, unlike Dostoyevsky's "The Double" and Poe's "William Wilson," Saramago's "Double" does not wrap the perception of a double in the protagonist's delusional pathology or a suggestion of an inner self projected outward. The similarity objectively exists, down to the men's moles and fingerprints, and has the comedy of, in Henri Bergson's formulation, "something mechanical encrusted upon the living." Cloning, one letter away from clowning, affords us a smile as well as a shudder. Tertuliano's double, unlike William Wilson's, is not a whispering voice of conscience; António Claro is a bit actor in movies turned into videos, a habitual seducer, a karate expert (he is stronger than Tertuliano, but not apparently more muscular), and a heel, who totes a gun—in short, a bad actor. The reader shares the hero's desire that he be erased. The novel, with its farcical elements, does not quite deepen into the dizzying vortex of identity issues that may have been intended; it remains more comic than not, and lacks the unforced momentum and resonance of "Blindness," which, like Camus's "The Plague," allegorizes societal breakdown and a basic fear. Most of us are afraid of going blind; being duplicated is a relatively minor worry.

Yet Saramago has a questing and well-stocked mind, amiably engaged in the patient investigation of human nature. To bulk out the lean diagrammatics of his plot, with its mere four principals, he ruminates on the vagaries of language and the difficulty of applying common sense to our actions. Both are aspects, perhaps, of the same problem, human irrationality. Human beings are too complex and conflicted for words; "All the dictionaries put together," Maria da Paz tells Tertuliano, "don't contain half the terms we would need in order for us to understand each other." A lack of words at the right time entangles Tertuliano in problems. He is unable, out of shame or caution, to tell Maria da Paz of the existence of his double, and his wordlessly mailing a false beard to António Claro goads the other to plot revenge: "Good heavens, how ridiculous, where will it all end, cry those happy people who have never come face-to-face with a copy of themselves, who have never suffered the terrible affront of



"Right. Money isn't everything—what's the other thing again?"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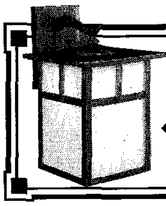
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receiving in the post a false beard in a box without even a pleasant, good-humored note to soften the blow." On the other hand, a letter to a film production company that Tertuliano forges in Maria da Paz's name provides a fatal link of evidence. A conversation with his inquisitive, solicitous mother leads him to think:

> Words can be the very devil, there we are thinking we allow out of our mouths only the words that suit us, and suddenly another word slips out, where it came from we don't know, we didn't ask for it to appear, and because of that word, which we often have difficulty remembering afterward, the whole conversation abruptly changes direction, and we find ourselves affirming what we denied before, or vice versa, what happened just now was a perfect example, I hadn't intended speaking to my mother so soon about this whole mad story.

Common sense actually figures in this mad story as a character, a voice that pops up in Tertuliano's head to complain about their relationship: "You and me, your common sense and you, we hardly ever meet to talk, only very occasionally, and, to be perfectly honest, it's hardly ever been worthwhile." The personification is less intrusive as the novel gathers steam, but near the end the author declares that "with a little common sense, the matter could have ended there," and traces human problems to a verbal error:

> The proof that the universe was not as well-thought-out as it should have been lies in the fact that the Creator ordered the star that illumines us to be called the sun. Had the king of the stars borne the name Common Sense, imagine how enlightened the human spirit would be now.

One wonders. "Common sense" in Portuguese is surprisingly similar to the English: *comum senso* or *bom senso*. Nevertheless, some spirit-altering connotations may be lost in translation. Is common sense really a cure-all? We are told of Tertuliano not only that he is depressed and bored but that, in his mother's words, "there's a part of you that has been asleep ever since you were born." Embracing double trouble is perhaps his way of waking up; the heart has its reasons that reason knows not of. The stagnating heart welcomes an irruption, even a harsh and dangerous one; the appeal of unreason cannot be legislated out of Utopia. To enthrone common sense as the king of the stars could spell the end of priests, magicians, beauticians, advertising executives, and novelists. ♦

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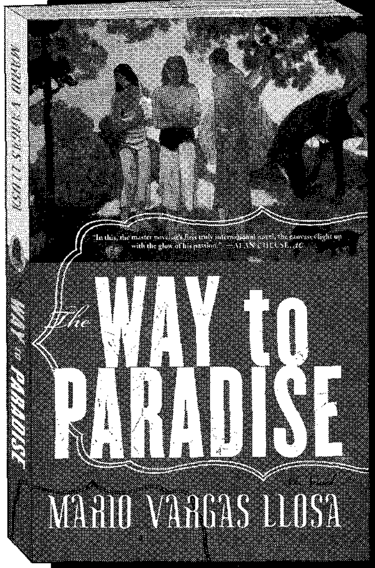

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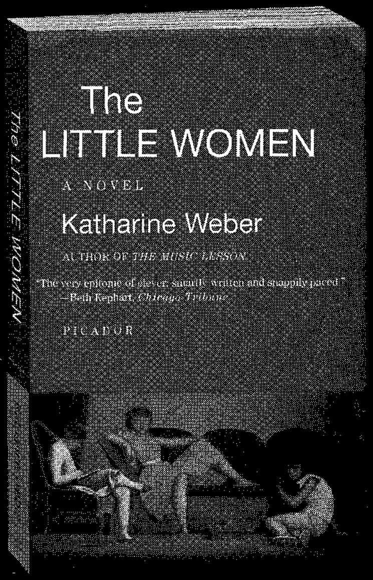

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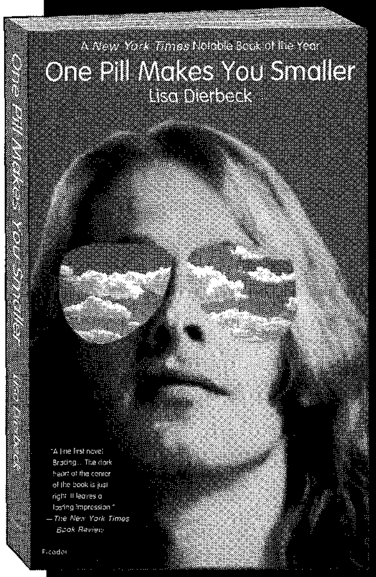

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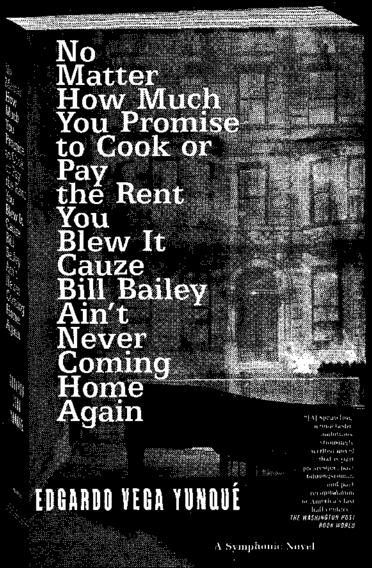
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THE THEATRE

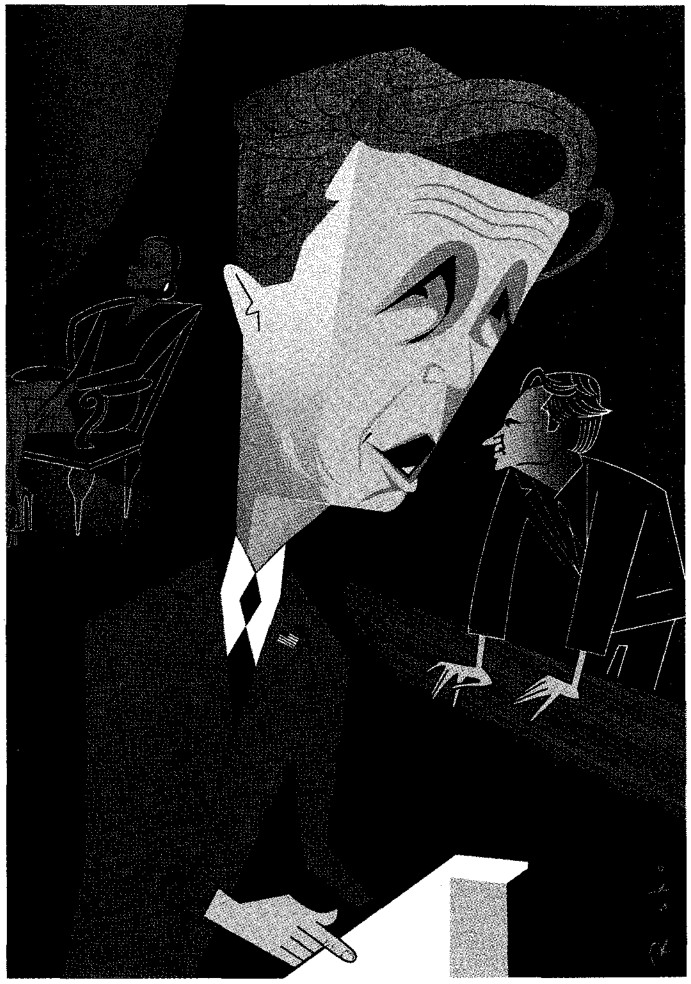
COLLATERAL DAMAGE

David Hare on the march to war in Iraq.

BY JOHN LAHR

"I don't do nuance," President Bush has reportedly said. Fortunately, David Hare does. Although he is sometimes sniffy about journalism—he titled his own volume of feuilletons "Writing Left-Handed"—Hare functions best as a dramatist when he assumes the role of reporter and allows his intellectual curiosity to override his literary immodesty. For more than a decade, his plays have brought us news from the inner sanctums of power: the Anglican Church ("Racing Demon," 1990), the legal system ("Murmuring Judges," 1991), the Labour Party ("The Absence of War," 1993), and the management of the British railways ("The Permanent Way," 2003). Now, in his best political play yet, "Stuff Happens" (at London's Royal National Theatre), he brings us an exhilarating account of the genesis of the current war in Iraq.

On a spare, gray stage dominated by a large blond-wood table to which the actors spring from chairs lined up around the perimeter like so many soldiers on parade, Hare and his director, Nicholas Hytner, marshal with splendid rigor the facts, the personalities, and the issues at play in America's rush to war. The lucid three-hour retelling is a sort of docu-fiction, in which the events, public statements, and segues are all authentic while the behind-closed-doors dialogue is either punched up from known sources or invented. In Hare's version of history, our leaders, who, like the rest of the nation, lost the illusion of invulnerability on September 11, 2001, are compelled to construct for the American people an unambivalent triumphalist fable of revenge. Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein are enemies created by America—a point that Secretary of State Colin Powell (Joe Morton) drives home to the President (Alex Jennings) while trying to talk him down from war. "There's an element of hypocrisy, George," Powell says of his boss's argument that Hussein is hiding weapons of mass destruction. "We were trading with the guy! Not long ago. People keep asking, how do we know he's got weapons of mass destruction? How do we know? Because we've still got the receipts." The American leaders, in their desperate search for a heroic narrative, call off the British, who have bin Laden cornered in the Tora Bora mountains of Afghanistan. "The British Army capturing him would not ring the same bells," Tony Blair (the droll Nicholas Farrell) says, his voice nearly cracking with frustration.



Andoh, Jennings, and Farrell in "Stuff Happens."

ROBERT RISKO

From a theatrical point of view, the real Bush is a bad actor. Although everything in his statements is designed to show strength, nothing in his presentation of self does. He cannot sustain the illusion of intellectual command. He is betrayed by his darting eyes, his misspeaking, his inability to improvise, his awkward pigeon-chested swagger. In Texas, that swagger "is called walking," he said at the Republican National Convention, earlier this month; everywhere else, they call it walking on tiptoes. In his portrayal of Bush, Jennings has to work hard to mute his own natural alertness. He has Bush's baby face but not his slow metabolism, which is what allows his characterization to avoid lampoon. Hare wants us to think about Bush, not dismiss him.

Michael Moore's film "Fahrenheit 9/11" shows footage of the first seven minutes after Bush got word of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, while sitting in a classroom at a Sarasota, Florida, elementary school; the President appears to sit in a state of almost comic blankness. Bush, however, claims to have been far from blank. "They had declared war on us," he later told Bob Woodward, "and I made up my mind at that moment that we were going to war." In "Stuff Happens," that idée fixe plays strongly beneath the swirl of hand-wringing and executive argy-bargy. In fact, one of the things that Hare shows so well is that thought for Bush is a sort of pseudo event, a posture that carries no weight—thinking is a fuse that has to be blown in order for him to do what he wants to do. We see this best as

Bush sits through Powell's eloquent elucidation of the Pottery Barn rule—you break it, you own it—in reference to unilateral action in Iraq. Bush's opaque form of listening is a kind of vamping. His terse responses follow the General's argument, but he doesn't appear to take it in. Morton's Powell is perhaps a little overwrought for a general who keeps on his desk the motto "Never let them see you sweat"; nonetheless, he's impressive. Of the entire cast of characters, Powell, who was not asked by the President to weigh in on the final decision to go to war, emerges with his dignity the most intact.

Hare has a sharp eye for ironic detail, and he knows a dramatic moment when history throws one at him. When, in order to shore up Blair's precarious political position, the Bush Cabinet is forced to entertain the idea of working toward a second United Nations resolution, the prospect sends the U.N.-hating Vice-President Dick Cheney around the bend. Cheney is well played here by Desmond Barrit, who has a blocky build and a sour, stolid mien—one of the few actors who bear a physical resemblance to the person whose delirium they are portraying. In the scintillating debate that ensues, Cheney argues that Blair is becoming more trouble than he's worth. "It's a good rule," he says. "When the cat shit gets bigger than the cat, get rid of the cat."

Still, Hare refuses to turn "Stuff Happens" into a jamboree of self-righteousness. The audience gets its share of laughs—"I didn't even find lunch," the arms inspector David Kay says of his vain search for weapons of mass destruction—but the play smiles with cold teeth. To pass the time between sessions at a Camp David Cabinet meeting, Bush works on a jigsaw puzzle, and Laura Bush (Isla Blair) asks if anyone knows a hymn. The national-security adviser, Condoleezza Rice (Adjoa Andoh), begins to sing "Amazing Grace." The moment, which one expects to be camp, turns out to be poignant. Rice's voice has a vulnerability that the rhetoric of the government does not, and the rest of the Cabinet joins in.

By making ambivalence manifest, "Stuff Happens" shows an admirable maturity. Hare is looking for complexity, not self-congratulation, and an inquiry that is history, not agitprop—a strategy that becomes clear in a crucial early scene in which an angry journalist attacks the audience and the author for their "relentless archaic discussion of the manner of the liberation":

> How obscene it is, how decadent, to give your attention not to the now, not to the liberation, not to the people freed . . . the splendid thing done—freedom given to people who were not free—this thing is ignored, preferring as we do to fight among ourselves—our own disputes, our own resentment of each other elevated way above the needs of the victims. . . . A people hitherto suffering now suffer less. This is the story. No other story obtains.

Hare, whose play documents the folly of single solutions, is too canny to settle for one himself. What is the story behind Bush and the war? The oil thing? The Oedipal thing? The imperial thing? The reëlection thing? "Stuff Happens" keeps all of these possibilities in play. Terrorism attacks thought; September 11th made us all—even the Cabinet members—survivors. The political mess that ensued, the play shows, is proof positive that stress makes you stupid. The mind in a hurry sees what it expects or wants to see. The very title of the play—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's response to the looting and mayhem in Iraq after the invasion—is offensive because it refuses to acknowledge reality, to name pain. "Stuff Happens" goes some way toward rectifying that omission, and that alone makes it a mighty act of antiterrorism.

At the finale, an Iraqi exile stands before us on an empty stage. "They came to save us, but they had no plans," he says. "And now the American dead are counted, their numbers recorded, their coffins draped in flags. How many Iraqis have died? How many civilians? No figure is given. Our dead are uncounted." He adds, "Iraq has been crucified. . . . Basically it's a story of a nation that failed in only one thing. . . . It failed to take charge of itself." As the curtain falls, Hare and Hytner leave us with this one last unspoken provocation: no Iraqi would have been free to make such a bold accusation if, seventy-two days after September 11th, Bush hadn't put his arm around Rumsfeld in the White House Situation Room and said, "What kind of war plan do you have for Iraq?" ♦

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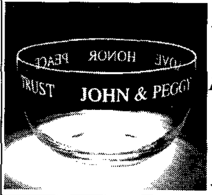

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Vital new recordings of Mozart, Bach, and bel canto.

BY ALEX ROSS

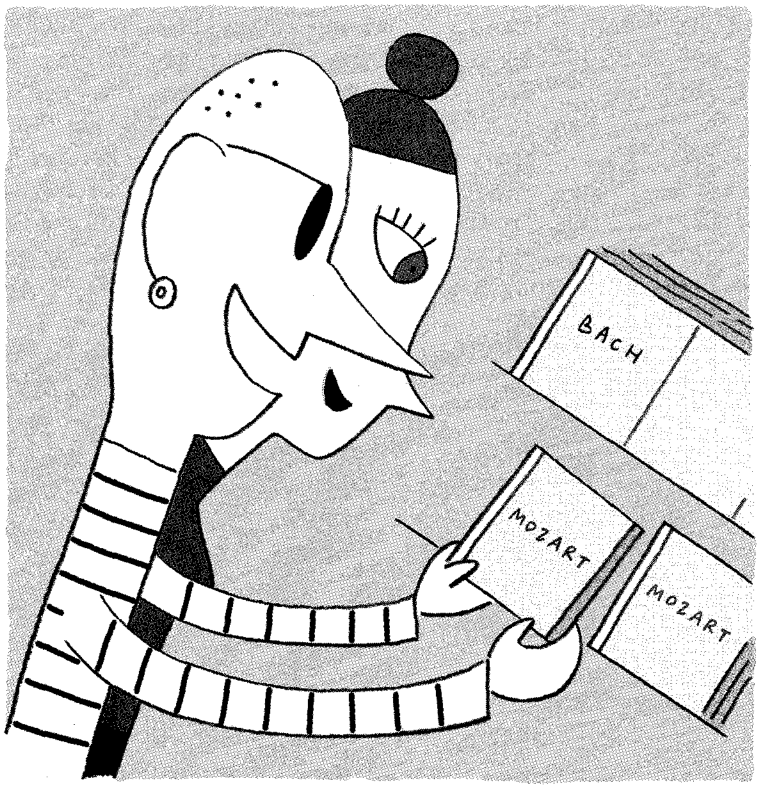
The breathtaking profanity of Mozart's letters—"Whoever doesn't believe me may lick me, world without end," and so on—has led one British researcher to conclude recently that the composer had Tourette's syndrome. What's interesting about this theory, which has become the goofball classical-music news item of the season, is that anyone would actually need a far-fetched medical explanation for the fact that a young male with healthy appetites swore a lot and liked to talk about sex. Mozart, like Shakespeare, moved with equal ease through the most refined and most raucous circles of his world. Only if classical music is confined to the fleshless end of the spectrum does Mozart's exaltation of the body become a psychological anomaly crying out for interpretation.

René Jacobs's recording of "The Marriage of Figaro" (Harmonia Mundi), the most startling and perhaps the best classical recording released so far this year, reconciles man and music, sacred and profane. The first bars of the overture serve notice that the "divine Mozart" is coming lustily to earth. Sforzandos land like sucker punches, legatos become greasy slurs. The four-minute overture is an event in itself: you sense the creation of a new political and cultural stage on which independent actors can seize the spotlight. Many great "Figaro" recordings of the past—Erich Kleiber's, Karl Böhm's, Carlo Maria Giulini's—have surveyed the scene from Olympian heights, as if to take the aristocracy's side in the central contest between the decadent Count Almaviva and his ascendant servant Figaro. This is "Figaro" told from Figaro's point of view.

Jacobs, a countertenor turned conductor, is a dizzyingly prolific musician who has also just released a strong recording of Haydn's "The Seasons." You'd think the quality of his work would suffer, but Jacobs seems to find new energy whenever he enters the studio. At every turn, the players of the Concerto Köln throw in some visceral accent, airy ornament, or arresting noise. This is the only "Figaro" I know where the recitative is as engaging as the arias: the fortepiano chimes in like some Hapsburg honky-tonk, cellos indulge in meditative Bachian solos, winds and brass mimic dance combos or military bands. Those who prefer their Mozart to purr along like one of Karajan's Porsches may not enjoy Jacobs's rugged style, yet there is no sacrifice of musical values. The climactic ensemble of forgiveness, in which the voices become buttresses of a weightless cathedral, is all the more stupendous for having risen up from such gritty ground.

Basses singing Figaro tend to indulge in a lot of gruff-voiced mugging. The vital young singer Lorenzo Regazzo takes a more serious approach to the title role. When Figaro declares that the Count will dance to his appointed tune, Regazzo deploys some unusually strong, stentorian tones, as if to hint at the social revolution that this opera is said to have prophesied. Simon Keenlyside, as the Count, also declines to play the buffoon, instead using his considerable virtuosity to create a manic, almost frightening character. Patrizia Ciofi and Angelika Kirchschlager, as Susanna and Cherubino, both sing with a delightfully wide range of inflections, which create a kind of stage action for the ears. Véronique Gens, as the Countess, stays closer to the usual refinement, but she stops short of high-end warbling. Many "name" singers have glided through "Figaro" as if leading a museum tour; these performers, however, aren't afraid to show some skin, vocally speaking, and in so doing they get closer to the flesh-and-blood Mozart than any other cast on record.

The gorgeous Russian soprano Anna Netrebko, who recently released a recital disk entitled "Sempre Libera," on Deutsche Grammophon, is in the process of entering that rarefied élite known as the Yo-Yo Club. Yo-Yos are classical musicians who have escaped from the relative anonymity that even such august talents as Gidon Kremer and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson inhabit; they have touched true-blue American celebrity, appearing on network TV, in glossy magazines, even in the movies. Netrebko, who is thirty-three, first reached international audiences as part of Valery Gergiev's stable of Russian singers, then moved on to the deluxe circuit of the Salzburg Festival, Covent Garden, and the Metropolitan Opera, where she captivated audiences in Prokofiev's "War and Peace" in 2002. This year, she went so far as to appear in the movie "Princess Diaries 2," singing "Sempre Libera" from "La Traviata."



René Jacobs's "Figaro" is the opera told from Figaro's point of view.

PHILIPPE PETIT-ROULET

Whenever a performer joins the Yo-Yo Club, a certain brand of connoisseur automatically questions the seriousness of his or her artistry. The move from excited murmuring to skeptical muttering has happened amazingly fast in Netrebko's case: critics have already accused her of subjugating her talent to D.G.'s marketing strategies, which, by modern big-media standards, are meek in the extreme. Do a few come-hither poses or would-be MTV videos really diminish a singer's artistry? Or do they diminish a critic's ability to judge her on vocal merits alone? To my ears, Netrebko has lost none of the radiance that she displayed in her first appearances. If anything, her voice is more lustrous and more substantial than before—the lower range darker and richer, the high notes brilliant if not totally secure, the legato phrases luxuriously long.

The repertory on the new D.G. disk is ambitious. Netrebko rides deep into the heart of Callas territory, singing the Act I scena from "Traviata," the mad scenes from "Lucia di Lammermoor" and "I Puritani," and the climactic sleepwalking scene from "La Sonnambula." She also sings the Willow Song and the Ave Maria from "Otello" and "O mio babbino caro," from "Gianni Schicchi," which are Renée Fleming signature pieces—a shot across the bow of the reigning "beautiful voice." Netrebko creates no psychological drama of the Callas variety, nor does she plot her way intelligently through each phrase, as Fleming lately has done. Instead, she sails through the music without apparent effort, navigating these arias as if they were a calm Aegean bay. What depths there are come from Claudio Abbado, conducting the Mahler Chamber Orchestra; few recitals have an accompaniment so voluptuously nuanced. Until Netrebko becomes a recurring character on "CSI: Salzburg," I'd say that she deserves the hype she has received.

René Jacobs, in his recording of "Figaro," takes command of a familiar masterwork by reinvigorating every phrase. Netrebko invests famous Italian arias with the eternal novelty of a fresh voice. The young Austrian pianist Till Fellner does something stealthier but no less impressive in a new recording of another well-worn classic: Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier," Book I, on the ECM label. The initial impression is of an unusually serene, even placid reading of Bach's twenty-four piano preludes and fugues. After the high-tension drama of Glenn Gould's recording of this cycle, or the philosophical journeys of Edwin Fischer or Rosalyn Tureck, Fellner may seem too dispassionate in his approach. Yet his unerring musicality is almost monumental in itself. This may not be the most intellectually imposing "Well-Tempered Clavier" ever recorded, but it is possibly the most sensuous and seductive. If Fellner can sustain such unbroken concentration in live performance—he will appear at Zankel Hall on December 1st—he will become a major artist.

The pianist is a protégé of Alfred Brendel, but he is quite unlike Brendel in his desire to maintain at all times a natural musical flow. He has an almost compulsive attachment to clean, rounded piano tone; a virtuoso of the soft and sustaining pedals, he uses them to put a kind of lacquer finish on Bach's sometimes rough and dissonant harmony. (He is helped by the inimitable "halo" effect of ECM's sound engineering.) Before you can bliss out completely to the beauty of the playing, however, carefully shaded crescendos and clipped attacks create a sense of mounting drama. The central minor-key fugues—especially the C-sharp minor, the F minor, the B-flat minor, and the twelve-tone-ish B minor—acquire an ominous density before they make their final turns into the major. In the faster-paced pieces, Fellner executes runs of stroboscopic evenness and clarity. The weight dissolves and the architecture dances. ♦

THE CURRENT CINEMA

GHOSTS

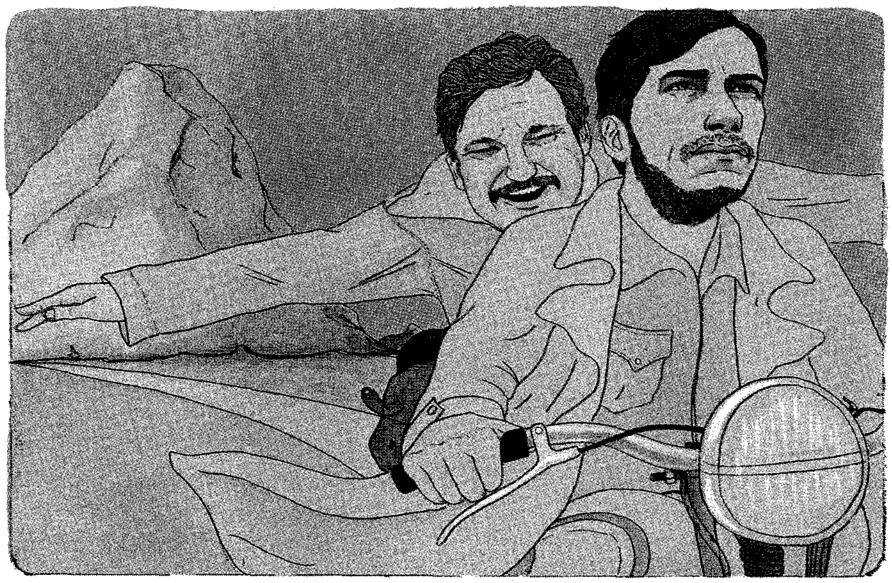
"The Motorcycle Diaries" and "Shaun of the Dead."

BY ANTHONY LANE

Once you have decided to make a film about Che Guevara, you face a forbidding choice. His life was a feast, so on which particular course should you concentrate? The taking of Cuba? The fiasco in the Congo? Bolivia and death? In "The Motorcycle Diaries," based on a memoir by Che himself, the Brazilian director Walter Salles has gone for the appetizer: an eight-month, eight-thousand-mile journey undertaken by Guevara (Gael García Bernal) and his buddy Alberto Granado (Rodrigo de la Serna) through South America in 1952. This was hardly a leisure pursuit, but the movie's curious air of suspended animation leaves you asking whether it could start a cinematic trend, in which the fun-hunting days of history's most transforming radicals will be replayed for our delight. Look out for "Trotsky: The Frat-House Years," plus a tender glimpse at that little-known summer of A.D. 15, when Jesus hardly left the beach.

So what we get is a neophyte, a medical student named Ernesto Guevara de la Serna: pre-beard, pre-beret, dressed in a plain white shirt instead of combat fatigues, and still waiting for that "Che" to land at the front of his name. It began life, if the film is to be believed, not as a nickname but as a noise—a chewy, specifically Argentine word (it means "hey, you"), mocked by a couple of girls in a café. It is the second most important sound in the film, the first being the ominous burp of the 1939 500-cc. Norton motorbike on which the two friends venture forth. They christen it the Mighty One, although, given that the number of shots in which it gobbles up the open road are heavily outnumbered by those in which it slithers, skids, tips over, coughs, and, in one instance, runs hell-for-leather into the side of a cow, the Undependable One seems a more appropriate tag. Halfway through, the dear old crock gives up the gasket, and the rest of the picture is incorrectly titled. What fuelled our heroes was a mixture of footslog, hitching, truck, raft, and 1,000-cc. bullshit—indispensable when you need free food and a bed for the night.

The question is, Does the director, unlike the Mighty One, give Che too easy a ride? What interests Salles is not insurrection but the glow of those common, humane responses—to rank injustice, to the helplessly sick, to the plight of the uprooted poor—which may, within selected souls, burst into violent flame. That will do nothing for Che fanatics (if they're still out there), who may gripe at the film's political shyness. True, we see Guevara loitering near an American-owned copper mine in Chile, picking up a small rock, and throwing it at a truck carrying workers; but it's a milky gesture, and I was unsurprised to read, in Jon Lee Anderson's unbeatable 1997 biography, "Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life," that Guevara, far from slinging stones, actually went into the mine and inspected it. As the book shows, that instinct—the empirical grounding that made Che, a disciplined scion of the Argentine bourgeoisie, the least abstract of revolutionaries—never deserted him, and the comandante who would rage against the shoddy workmanship of Soviet machine tools being shipped to Cuba is recognizably the same creature as the proto-medic who, in the latter half of the movie, refuses rubber gloves when he arrives at a leper colony on the Amazon, shaking bare hands with the patients. The local nuns are appalled, but Guevara is not doing it to provoke them, or to jack up his claims as a saint. He is doing it because he has asked the head doctor whether leprosy is infectious through casual contact and has learned that it is not.


Rodrigo de la Serna and Gael García Bernal re-create Che Guevara's road trip.

LARA TOMLIN

You suddenly grasp, in the dramatic punch of that scene, what "The Motorcycle Diaries" is for, whereas much of the film glides past with a slightly purposeless elegance. Astounding landscapes rise and fall away; enticing women glance and dance and disappear; the Norton 500 chugs grimly into yet another ditch. At artful moments, the action pauses for portraits—not stills but wavering poses—of the people, mostly impoverished, whom Ernesto meets along the way. These are in black-and-white, and we are meant to imagine them burning, like photographic exposures, into the Guevara conscience. Are movies the best place for such edification? I know of only a handful of films that can begin to match the sober eye of Walker Evans, say, or Dorothea Lange, and the insertion of documentary rigor into something as ravishing as "The Motorcycle Diaries" smacks, I fear, of the picturesque. The focus of the average viewer will thus be totally split. On the one hand, you are urged to witness oppression through the eyes of Che Guevara. On the other hand, those eyes belong to the actor Gael García Bernal.

Bernal is so preposterously beautiful that all his movies tend, at a certain point, to stop whatever they're supposed to be doing and gawk. He was good in "Amores Perros" and better still in the rousing "Y Tu Mamá También," although audiences here have yet to savor his presence in Pedro Almodóvar's "Bad Education," in which Bernal merrily dips into gay sex. In "The Motorcycle Diaries," he passes half the time on the sidelines, drinking in the flow of different cultures with his liquid gaze. Alberto is always the first on the dance floor, but Ernesto is a wallflower and a flatfoot, preferring to sit and smile; this ties in exquisitely with the man who emerges from Anderson's book—scornful of luxury, happy in front of a chessboard, and twice as austere and watchful as the legend might suggest. Bernal may give no hint of the harshness to come, the tough guerrilla's heart that would sacrifice any number of lives for a cause, but that is hardly in the actor's brief. He belongs here because only a film star, and a hot one at that, can hope to remind us of what it was like to slip, willingly or not, under the spell of Che Guevara.

There is one scene in "Shaun of the Dead" that tells you more, in a couple of minutes, than any movie I have seen this year. It is a Sunday morning on a quiet London street, and Shaun (Simon Pegg) leaves his house, walks to the corner shop, buys a Diet Coke and an ice cream, and goes back home. That's it. A few details snag your attention: a smashed windshield, the yelp of a car alarm, torn sacks of trash, and a guy who shambles toward Shaun and stretches out his arms, but, still, nothing out of the ordinary. What Shaun doesn't yet realize is that the dead have returned to life and are stalking the streets, that civil society has crumbled, and that the man reaching for him is not begging but trying to gorge on human flesh. "No, I haven't got any change," Shaun says, brushing him aside, and that's the comic miracle of the sequence, which was shot in a single take. Go down most London streets any day and there will indeed be spilled garbage and a hole in a car window, with the occasional drunk or junkie, routing for help or cash. If Shaun fails to notice that England is swarming with zombies, it's because England is like that *all the time.*

The gingery Pegg is never going to challenge Gael García Bernal as a successor to Rudolph Valentino, but his amiable underplaying of catastrophe is judged to a tee. Pegg co-wrote the screenplay with the director, Edgar Wright, and together they have fashioned a smart, cultish, semi-disgusting homage to the fine British art of not bothering. Shaun and his fat friend Ed (Nick Frost) live in contented squalor, which is proving too much for Shaun's girlfriend, Liz (Kate Ashfield). She dumps him, which upsets him far more than the overnight, cannibalistic collapse of civilization, and rightly so. The rest of the film shows the two of them (he wants to win her back), along with Ed, a couple of edible acquaintances, and Shaun's kindly mother (Penelope Wilton), hacking a path through white-eyed, blood-spattered crazies to the local pub. It has to be the pub, obviously, because Ed needs somewhere he can smoke.

Once the plot stays and squats at the pub, the humor shrinks a little, and Wright has no option but to tell the familiar tale of stoic defense, complete with cameos from various portions of entrail. This will be old meat to fans of "Dawn of the Dead" and other George Romero classics, and those of us without higher degrees in zombiedom will prefer the novelty and wit of the early scenes, in which Shaun and Ed, with a little help from a cricket bat and a shovel, overcome their congenital ennui. (There's a fine moment, worthy of Nick Hornby, in which they flip through a box of LPs, arguing heatedly about which records should be used as airborne decapitators against a pair of advancing maniacs. With seconds to spare, they decide on Dire Straits and Sade.) One of the staples of modern intellectual complaint has been that Western man has succumbed to a form of living death, alienated from true social consciousness to the point of inanition. There are two ways to dramatize this compelling theory. One is the Antonioni method, whereby disenchanted Italians walk through urban settings, alternately moaning and lunging at their fellow-solitaries. The other is demonstrated by "Shaun of the Dead," in which disenchanted Brits do more or less the same thing but for rather more pressing reasons—becoming, in the undying words of Shaun's mother, "a bit bitey." She adds, "I don't want to cause a fuss." The perfect epitaph for Great Britain, surely, as it chews itself to bits. ♦

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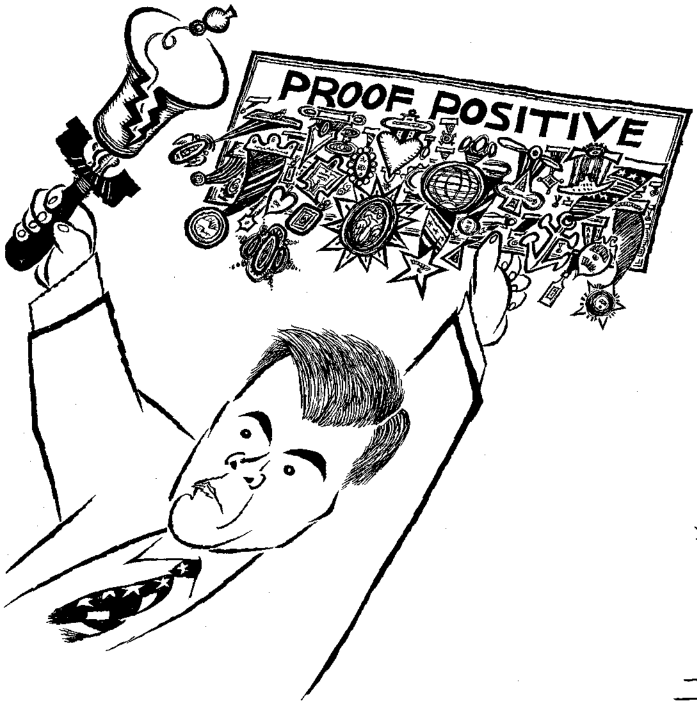
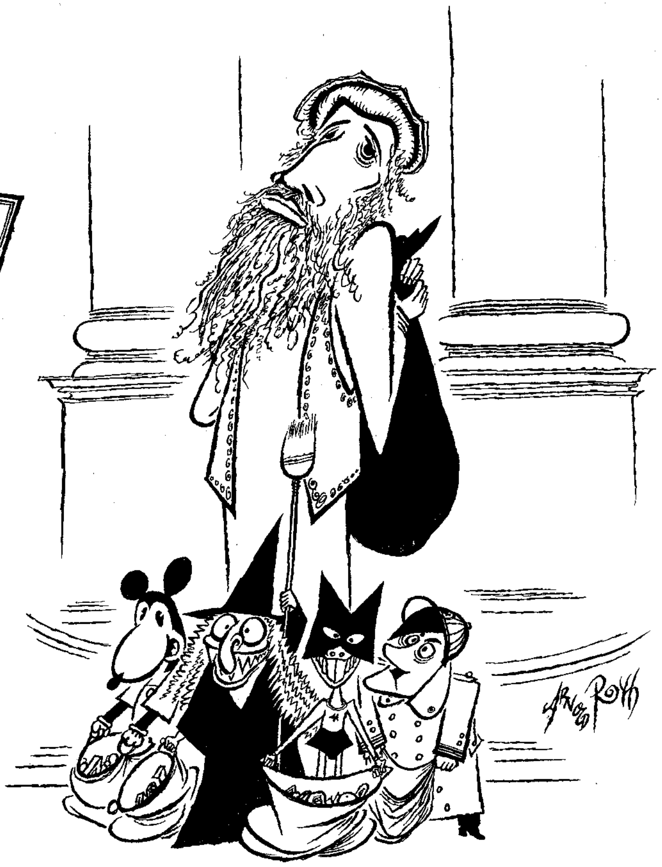
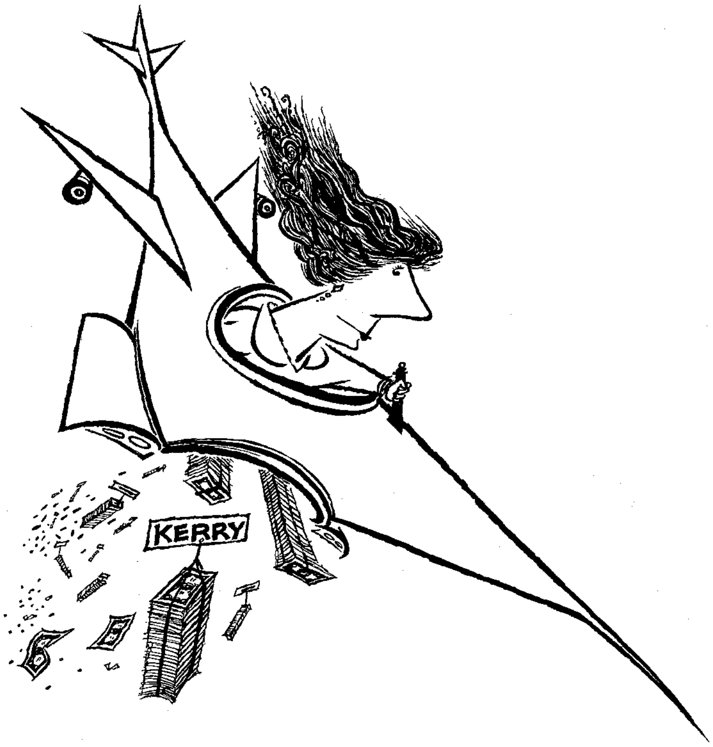
OCTOBER SURPRISES BY ARNOLD ROTH AND ANDY BOROWITZ



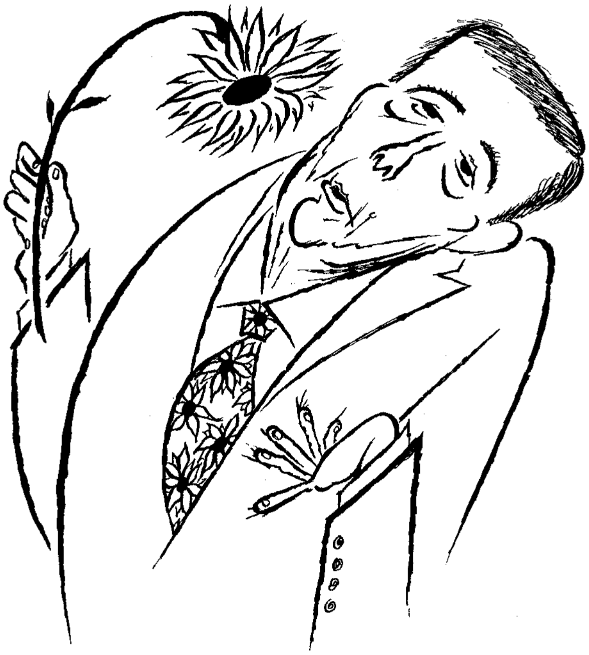
Tom Ridge raises threat level to "John Kerry threw away his medals."



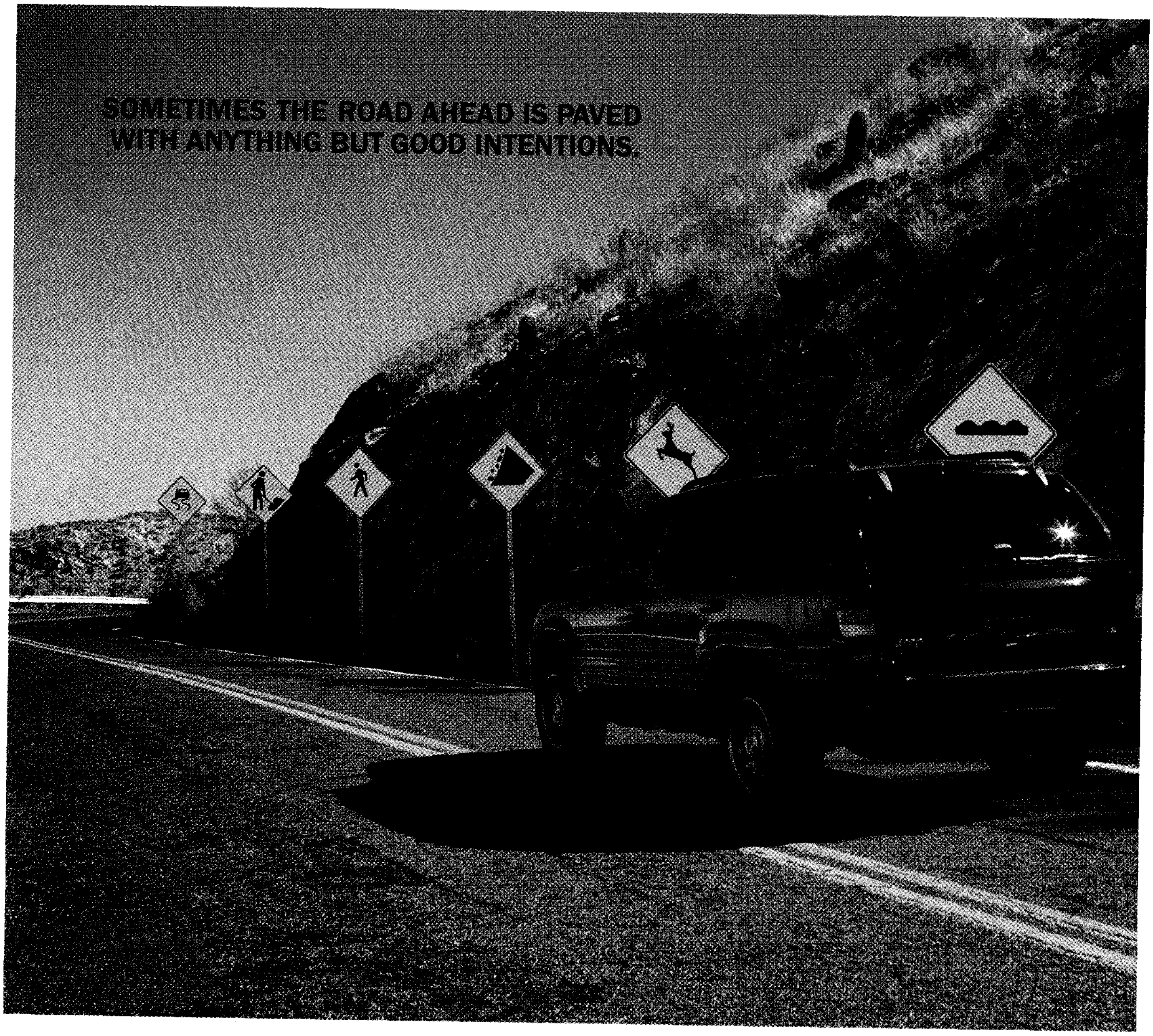
White House announces capture of trick-or-treater wearing bin Laden mask.

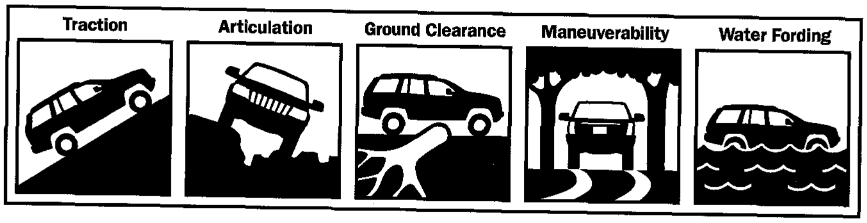


Teresa Heinz Kerry airdrops crisp ten-dollar bills over key battleground states.



Campaigning in San Francisco, John Ashcroft declares, "I am a gay American."


SOMETIMES THE ROAD AHEAD IS PAVED
WITH ANYTHING BUT GOOD INTENTIONS.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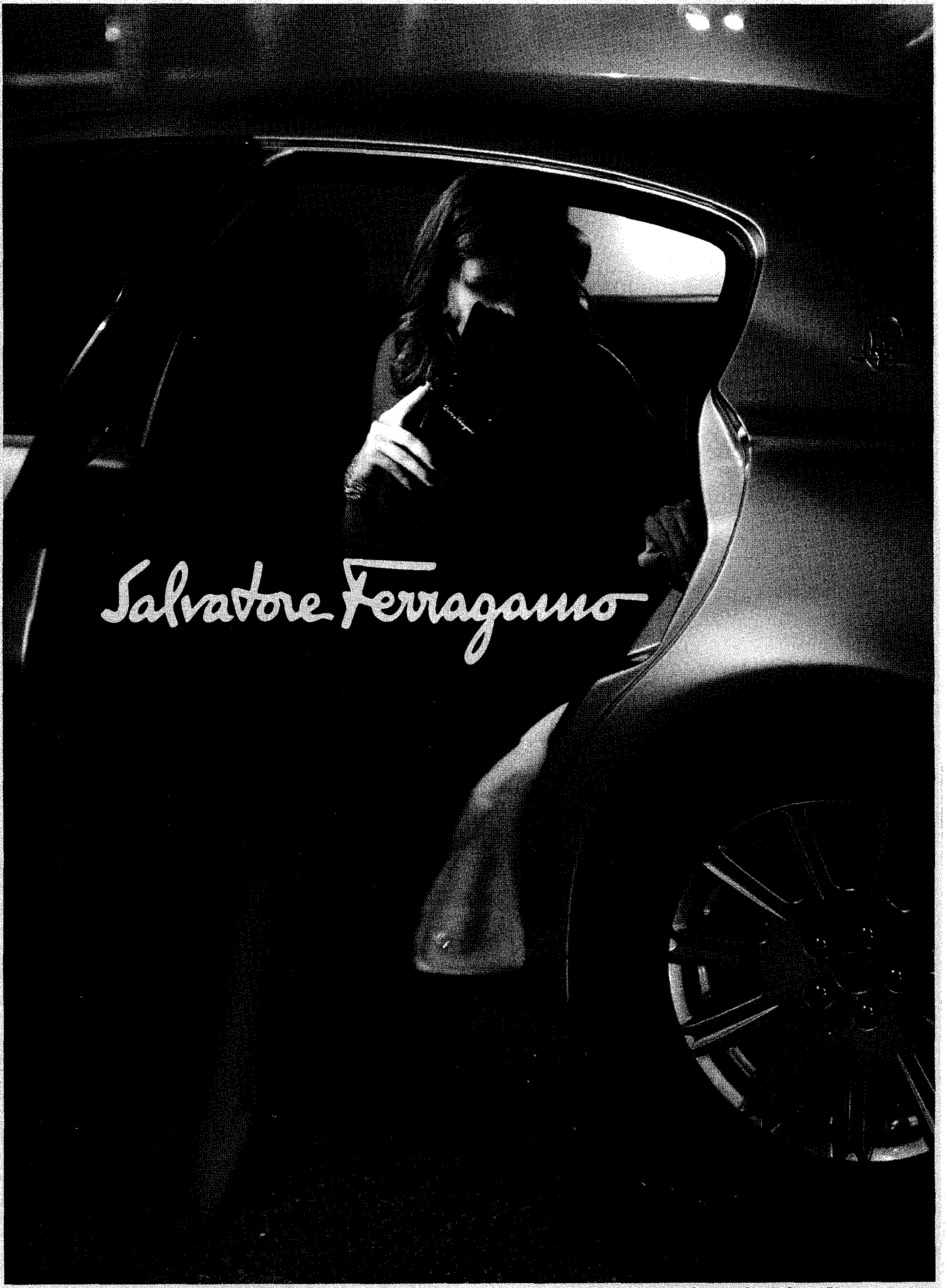

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